



VINCENT  
VAN GOGH  
DRAWINGS

VOLUME 3

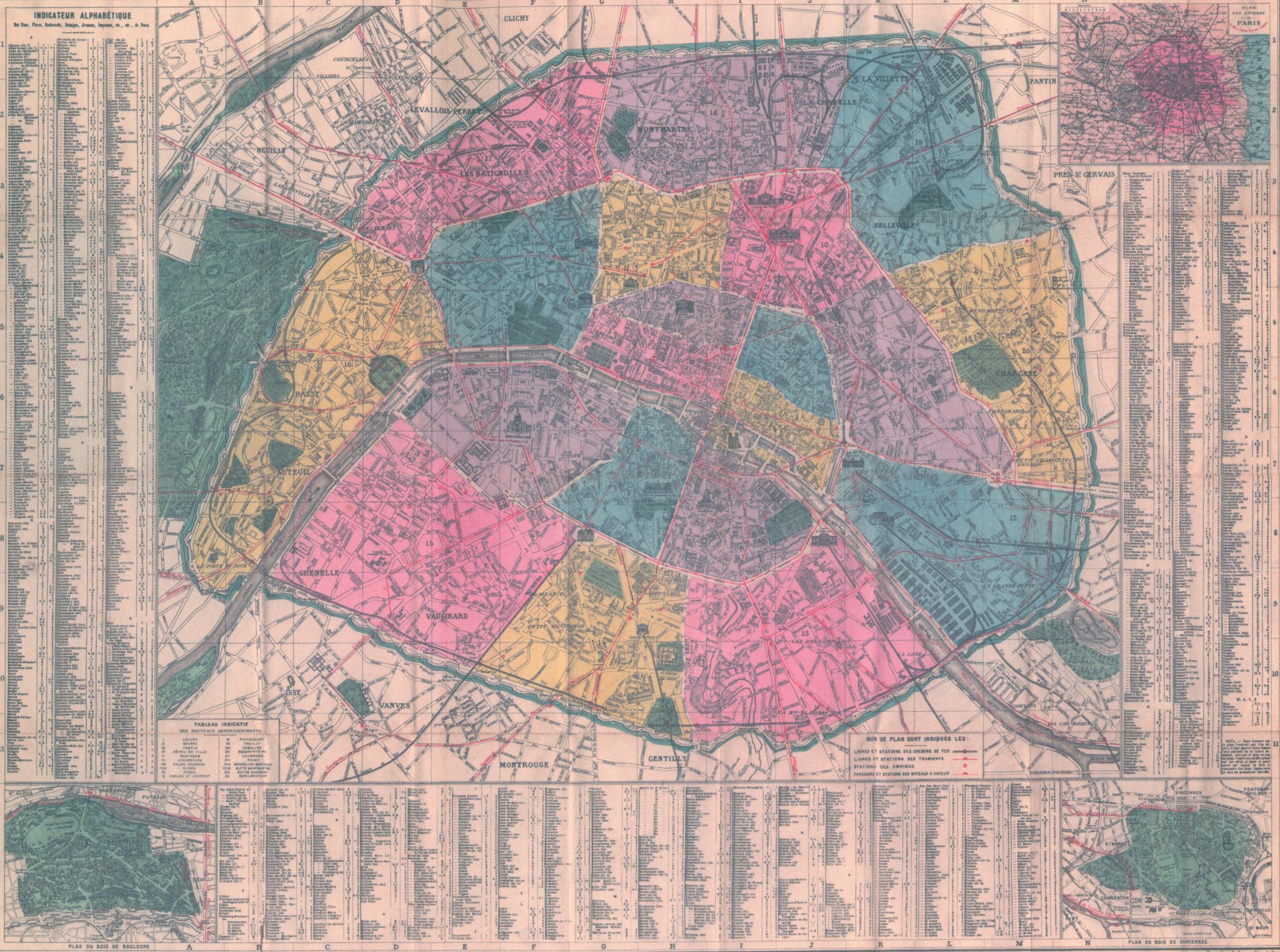
ANTWERP & PARIS

1885-1888

VAN GOGH MUSEUM

# NOUVEAU PLAN COMPLET ET ILLUSTRÉ DE LA VILLE DE PARIS DIVISÉ EN 20 ARRONDISSEMENTS & EN 80 QUARTIERS

1884.



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VAN GOGH MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM

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Vincent van Gogh: Drawings  
Volume 3: Antwerp & Paris 1885-1888

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Complete series of drawings and paintings,  
8 volumes

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# Foreword

The first two volumes of the five-part catalogue of the drawings by Vincent van Gogh in the Van Gogh Museum were published in 1996 and 1997, and were devoted to his Dutch period. This third volume, *Vincent van Gogh. Drawings 3. Antwerp & Paris, 1885-1888*, charts his transition to more modern work. It sketches a broad picture of this chapter in his career, which lasted for more than two years, examining such questions as stylistic and thematic innovations in his oeuvre, and his studies at the academy in Antwerp and in the studio of Fernand Cormon in Paris. The lack of a regular stream of letters has always been an obstacle to the dating of the Paris works, and this became a key issue in the authors' research. When studying the drawings they also came to the conclusion that several sheets were wrongly attributed to Van Gogh.

A relatively long time has passed since the publication of Volume 2. This is because the tempo with which the first two volumes were produced could not be maintained without affecting the quality of the research. On top of that, there was a change of functions within the Van Gogh Museum, with Sjraar van Heugten, the author of the first two volumes, exchanging his position of Curator of Prints and Drawings for that of Head of Collections. Marije Vellekoop, who had been closely involved in the work on those volumes, was appointed to the vacant post. Together they studied and described the 124 drawings now being published, with Marije Vellekoop acting as project manager. Roelie Zwikker provided invaluable support as assistant keeper, and Monique Hageman once again supplied the most meticulous documentation of the drawings.

The authors received assistance from many people, from both within and outside the museum, which is gratefully acknowledged elsewhere in this book. However, there are one or two people who played key roles whom I would like to single out here. Jan Robert, the editor, supervised the texts and the book as a whole; Michael Hoyle translated the texts for the English edition and was also a great support on the editorial front; the collaboration with Cees de Jong and his team at V+K Publishing was, as ever, remarkably smooth.

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The drawings in the Van Gogh Museum are so susceptible to damage that they are rarely exhibited. The present publication, and with it the other volumes of the catalogue, makes this superb collection permanently accessible to the outside world. With our specialists as skilled guides we can now view, study and admire it at our leisure. I would like to thank the authors and the research team for their devoted study and the tireless efforts which have led to the publication of this beautiful book.

John Leighton  
Director

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## Authors' preface

This third volume of the catalogue of Van Gogh's drawings in the museum covers those executed in Antwerp and Paris between late November 1885 and February 1888. Only eight of the known drawings which he made in that time are not in the Van Gogh Museum. For the reasons given in the Preface to Volume 1, letter sketches and sheets which can be traced back to a surviving sketchbook are not included.

The Introduction provides a general account of the artistic developments revealed by the drawings, and examines various aspects of Van Gogh's working method. Specific questions of content and technique are discussed in the catalogue section. The aim of this twofold approach is to present the works in the museum's collection in the context of the complete œuvre from this period.

As in Volume 2, drawings which form a distinct group are discussed under a single catalogue entry. This resulted in the compilation of large series of works, particularly those executed in the studio of Fernand Cormon in Paris. Discussing them individually would not have done justice to their nature as studies.

The lack of a regular exchange of letters when Vincent was living with his brother makes it difficult to arrive at precise dates for the Paris drawings.

Appendix 1 deals with two tracings which Van Gogh made as aids for paintings. They were not intended to be works in their own right and have therefore been excluded from the catalogue proper. Appendix 2 examines six sheets which are no longer attributed to Van Gogh.

We received a great deal of support and assistance from our colleagues in the museum while we were writing this book. Monique Hageman once again displayed unflagging enthusiasm as she worked her way through metres of catalogues, books and archival material in order to document each drawing as fully as possible. Roelie Zwicker was the indispensable linchpin who ensured that everything remained on track and gently reminded us of approaching deadlines. She also played a vital role in researching the literature and the archives, and never complained when asked to go to Antwerp or Paris for the umpteenth time.

The comments we received from the editorial group, which this time consisted of Leo Jansen, Jan Robert (also editor-in-chief), Chris Stolwijk, Louis van Tilborgh and Roelie Zwicker, once again led to numerous improvements to both the text and content of the book. Frans Stive and Alex Nikken smoothed the way for our study of the drawings themselves, and Esther Hoofwijk ensured that all the photographs we requested arrived promptly. We also owe a debt to all the colleagues who enabled us to work on the book by freeing us from other curatorial duties.

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We also received much assistance from outside the museum. Michael Hoyle, who supplied the excellent translation into English, had critical questions and comments which prompted us to modify our original Dutch manuscript. Nico Lingbeek, Marieke Nassi and Francien van Daalen have been commissioned by the Van Gogh Museum to conserve and restore the drawings, and were always ready with answers to technical questions.

We are also grateful to the Archief en Museum voor het Vlaamse Cultuurleven, Antwerp, Nienke Bakker (Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam), René van Beek (Allard Pierson Museum, Amsterdam), Saskia de Bodt, Blandine Bouret (Musée de Montmartre, Paris), Geneviève Bresc-Bautier (department of Sculptures, Musée du Louvre, Paris), Phillip Dennis Cate (Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, New Brunswick), Suzelyne Chandon (department of Sculptures, Musée du Louvre, Paris), Danièle Devynck (Musée Toulouse-Lautrec, Albi), Claire Fons (Bibliothèque d'Art et d'Archéologie Jacques Doucet, Paris), Jean-René Gaborit (department of Sculptures, Musée du Louvre, Paris), Lou Gils and Jef van Gool (Koninklijke Academie voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp), Fred Hustings (sovon Vogel-onderzoek Nederland, Beek Ubbergen), Marc Jacobs (Vlaams Centrum voor Volkscultuur, Brussels), Bernard Jégo (Musée de Montmartre, Paris), Gérard Jouhet, Anton Kos (Zuiderzee Museum, Enkhuizen), Ludovic Laugier (department of Antiquités Grecques et Romaines, Musée du Louvre, Paris), Frans Lauwers, Alexandra Ames Lawrence (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), Catherine Mathon (Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris), Marie Montembault (department of Antiquités Grecques et Romaines, Musée du Louvre, Paris), Peter Moreaux, Monique Nonne (Documentation department Musée d'Orsay, Paris), Fieke Pabst (Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam), Pierre and Liesbeth Passot, Jean Penent (Musée Paul-Dupuy, Toulouse), Ronald Pickvance, Kees Posthuma (Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam), Maxime Préaud (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD), The Hague, Herbert van Rheeden (University of Amsterdam), Cees van Romburgh (Scheepvaart Museum, Amsterdam), Anne Roquebert (Musée du Louvre and Musée d'Orsay, Paris), André Roussard, Emmanuel Schwartz (Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris), Frieda Sorber (Provinciaal Textilmuseum, Ranst), the Stadsarchief Antwerpen, Caroline van der Star (Koninklijke Academie voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp), Bérangère Tachenne (Musée Toulouse-Lautrec, Albi), Richard Thomson, Henri Vannoppen, Wouter van der Veen, Ruben Verbist (Vlaams Centrum voor Volkscultuur, Brussels) and Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov.

Last but by no means least we wish to thank our partners, Willem van Wamel and May Rijs, who gave us the support without which a book such as this cannot be written.

Marije Vellekoop and Sjraar van Heugten

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# Van Gogh in Antwerp and Paris: modern art for modern times

Soon after settling in Nuenen on 4 December 1883 Van Gogh's thoughts began turning to the opportunities which Antwerp might offer him as an artist. In March and April 1884 he wrote telling Theo that he was thinking about selling work there some day.<sup>1</sup> He returned to the subject in October that year. He missed city life and was toying with the idea of moving to The Hague, hoping that the change of scene would cheer him up. In the same breath he said he was thinking of taking lessons in drawing from the nude from the sculptor Jean Theodore Stracké (1817-1891) in Den Bosch, and it very much seems that a similar idea was behind his musings about Antwerp.<sup>2</sup>

A possible move there became a recurrent theme in the letters written in the closing months of 1884,<sup>3</sup> and in December he finally sought Theo's approval.<sup>4</sup> His brother's reaction is not known but it could not have been encouraging, for Vincent dropped the subject until May, when it came up again in connection with the possible sale of his work. In August he told Theo that he had been looking for the addresses of Antwerp art dealers to whom he could send some samples.<sup>5</sup>

Although he loved living in the country, it is quite clear that Van Gogh sometimes longed for the city, which was so enriching culturally. His plans received a fresh impetus when his supply of models in Nuenen unexpectedly dried up in September 1885.<sup>6</sup> His visit to the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam at the beginning of October exacerbated this long-felt need to be somewhere where there was more art and artists. At the end of November 1885, the 32-year-old Van Gogh travelled from Nuenen to Antwerp and took up lodgings at 194, Lange Beeldekensstraat (rue des Images) (fig. 1).

He was unable to work for the first few days, as the materials he had sent on from Nuenen only arrived a week later. That gave him the chance to explore the city with his sketchbook in hand (fig. 2). Shortly after his arrival he went to a house to inspect the dining room, which had been decorated by Henri Leys, and visited museums and churches at every opportunity.<sup>7</sup> He told Theo about his long rambles through the city, in the course of which he observed the docks, places of entertainment and other aspects of city life.<sup>8</sup>

Van Gogh does not mention the academy in his earliest letters from Antwerp, but he must have been planning to enrol from the very outset. That was no easy step for him, because in his letters he had derided the academic system and taken swipes at the artificiality and lack of empathy of academically trained artists. That being said, he had imposed a pretty strict regime on himself which consisted in part of methods derived from academic teaching, and had been guided by manuals based on academic practice. That he had some idea of what that teaching involved emerges from the letter mentioned above, in which he told Theo about

<sup>1</sup> See letters 434/358 and 444/363a.

<sup>2</sup> Letter 466/381.

<sup>3</sup> See letters 468/382, 469/383, 474/386b and 475/388.

<sup>4</sup> Letter 476/386a.

<sup>5</sup> Letters 506/409 and 527/420 respectively.

<sup>6</sup> See *Drawings 2*, p. 27.

<sup>7</sup> See letter 547/436.

<sup>8</sup> See letters 548/437 and 549/438.

a manual and added: 'I also have something which they use at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and in Antwerp' [466/381].

He was soon calling on art dealers, first with paintings he had made in Nuenen and then with work produced specially for the local art market. While he was in Nuenen he had realised that he would need more money than usual to carry out his plans in Antwerp, even if it was only to pay models, and that he would have to produce commercial work like views of the city. His walks through Antwerp showed him that there was certainly plenty of material. He considered making a large painting of a city view, but nothing came of it. He did paint the medieval castle, Het Steen, which he hawked (in vain) around several dealers.<sup>9</sup> That canvas is now lost, but two sketches have survived which were probably preliminary studies for it (*cats. 213, 214*). They, together with two other studies (*cats. 215, 216*), are the only essays in this genre from the Antwerp period.

There are probably two reasons why he abandoned it. His disappointing experiences with the local art dealers had made him realise that the economy was too weak at the time for him to score any commercial success with views of the city. More importantly, though, he had begun to concentrate on working from the live model, and in December 1885 that led to painted portraits and a few drawn studies.

<sup>9</sup> See letters 551/440 and 552/441.



1 Photograph of 194, Lange Beeldekens-straat (now No. 224). Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



2 Sketchbook sheet with figures on a street (F 1381r JH 1023), 1885. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

#### PORTRAITS AND STUDIES OF HEADS

Van Gogh became increasingly interested in portraiture while in Antwerp, partly because of the money it would bring in. He suspected that there were potential customers who would prefer a painted portrait to a photograph, which he regarded as lifeless.<sup>10</sup> Although there was a financial element, Van Gogh's growing interest in the genre was primarily artistic.

<sup>10</sup> See letters 550/439, 552/441 and

554/443.

<sup>11</sup> See letters 547/436, 550/439 and 554/443.

<sup>12</sup> The museum for Old Master paintings was housed in the church of the former Minorite friary, which had been the home of the academy since 1810. See Leen de Jong, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten te Antwerpen. Een historisch overzicht, Antwerp 1983, p. 8.

Although there are scores of studies of heads from Van Gogh's Dutch period, they can rarely, if ever, be described as portraits. They are above all attempts to capture a particular type of person. The sitter is not the subject but an anonymous paradigm of an old soldier, a working-class woman or a peasant woman (fig. 3). Those works are studies, exercises in depicting the human figure, made in indirect preparation for a more complex figure piece. Van Gogh made them for his own use, not for the sitter, and had no intention of selling them. It is true that he had always been interested in portraiture, but as yet it had found no place in his own work.

His visit to the Rijksmuseum in October 1885 had given him the opportunity to study the 17th-century Dutch masters more closely than ever before, and he was particularly struck by the portraits by Pieter Codde, Rembrandt and Frans Hals. The deep impression which they made on him is demonstrated by references to the work of 17th-century painters in his Antwerp letters.<sup>11</sup> There was also plenty to see in his new home. 'I go to the museum fairly often, and look at little else but a few heads and hands of his [Rubens] and of Jordaens. I know he is not as intimate as Hals and Rembrandt, but those heads *are so alive* in themselves' [550/439].<sup>12</sup>

A gradual shift took place as a result of this study. Admittedly the heads which Van Gogh drew and painted in Antwerp cannot be regarded as true portraits, but they are exercises towards that end. They mark a transitional stage between the studies of types he had made in his Dutch years and the portraits he was to produce in Paris.

Despite his deep admiration for those artists, his direct inspiration came not from them but from the people he saw around him. 'My thoughts are full of Rembrandt and Hals at the moment, not because I see so many of their pictures but because among the people here I see so many types who remind me of those days' [553/442]. The example of the old Dutch and Flemish masters strengthened Van Gogh's resolve to depict not so much external beauty in his portraits as to express the character and state of mind of the sitter. He put it as follows in that same letter to Theo: 'That was why I was struck so forcefully by a harlot's head by Rembrandt. Because he had understood that mysterious smile so infinitely beautifully, with a gravity such as only he possesses, that magician of magicians. This is something new for me, and it is absolutely what I want. Manet has done it, so has Courbet, and damn it I have the same ambition, because in addition I have felt too strongly in the very marrow of my bones the infinite beauty of the analyses of women by the very great men of literature, a Zola, Daudet, de Goncourt, Balzac' [553/442]. It was not always easy for Van Gogh to find suitable models in the strange city, and when he did they were quite a drain on his resources.



<sup>3</sup> Old man with a top hat (F 985 JH 286), 1882-83. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

He accordingly decided in the first half of January 1886 to enrol at the academy, where he could work from the live model.<sup>13</sup>

#### DRAWING FROM PLASTER CASTS AT THE ACADEMY

In order to gain admission to the academy Van Gogh showed some of his work to its director, Karel Verlat (1824-1890),<sup>14</sup> who was himself an accomplished painter of the human figure and of animals. Van Gogh was enrolled in the painting class after submitting two studies of heads.<sup>15</sup>

The internationally famed academy was undergoing a reorganisation when Van Gogh was admitted.<sup>16</sup> Plans for overhauling the curriculum had been in the air for years, and they were finally put into effect for the academic year 1885-86, the year in which Van Gogh joined.<sup>17</sup>

The painting lessons he took were at the intermediate level,<sup>18</sup> and involved classes in nature, classical antiquity, the figure, and landscape and animal painting.<sup>19</sup> It is known from the letters that Van Gogh attended Verlat's daytime figure painting class for the first two weeks. His name does not appear in the student register,<sup>20</sup> probably because the course was almost at an end.<sup>21</sup> He did enrol officially for the evening class in classical antiquity taught by François Vinck (1827-1903), during which shaded drawings were made from plaster torsos, limbs and complete casts of classical sculpture (figs. 4, 5).<sup>22</sup> When the painting course finished at the end of January, Van Gogh switched to the daytime drawing class, which was taught by Eugène Siberdt (1851-1931). The academy, which did not charge tuition fees, placed great emphasis on drawing and regarded it as the backbone of all the other disciplines.

The students had become familiar with classical sculpture some time before the classical antiquity class. It was part of the elementary-level curriculum in the form of engravings and series of lithographs which they had to copy in order to learn the proportions of the human body. One of the teaching methods favoured in Antwerp was that of Matthijs van Bree (1773-1839), which dated from 1821 (fig. 6).<sup>23</sup> At the end of the elementary course the students began drawing from plaster fragments like arms, heads and busts, and they also worked from plaster ornaments. Plaster casts had been studied in academies throughout Europe since the 17th century. It was the intermediate stage between copying engravings and drawing from the live model.<sup>24</sup> The main purpose of drawing from plaster casts was to increase the students' understanding of the effects of light and shade, which govern the modelling of a figure. In addition to the light and dark passages, the half tones play an important part in the process, because they soften the sharp contrast between the two extremes. The immobility and uniformity of colour of plaster casts make them more suitable for this purpose than live models. Sculpture also taught the students the proportions of the human body and the classical ideal of beauty.

Van Gogh was very enthusiastic about working from plaster casts, for at last it gave him the opportunity to study human anatomy. He was less happy, though, with the underlying rationale (see cat. 218). The academic method attached great importance to working

<sup>13</sup> See letter 554/443.

<sup>14</sup> See letters 554/443, 555/444 and 556/445.

<sup>15</sup> Letter 556/445.

<sup>16</sup> See L. Th. van Looij, *Een eeuw Nationaal Hoger Instituut voor Schone Kunsten te Antwerpen 1885/1985, Antwerp 1985; Guido Persoons* [et al.], Historiek Nationaal Hoger Instituut voor Schone Kunsten 1663-1885/1945, n.p. [1985]; *Annual report 1887; Verlat 1879*.

<sup>17</sup> The reorganisation had a threefold purpose: to set up an advanced course for gifted students, to offer a good practical and theoretical grounding for all students, and to encourage the application of art to the applied arts. The advanced course, the Hooger gesticht or Hooger Instituut, only started in 1887. See *Annual report 1887*, pp. xix and xxxii.

<sup>18</sup> The intermediate course followed on from an elementary course which was attended by working men as well as aspiring artists.

<sup>19</sup> The curriculum was split into three parts after the elementary course: painting, sculpture and architecture.

See *Annual report 1887*, p. xxi.

<sup>20</sup> *Registre d'inscription 1885-1891, Library of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp, inv. 289*.

<sup>21</sup> All the classes ended with a competition. The painting class finished at the end of January to enable the students to prepare for it. See letter 559/448 and *Annual report 1887*, pp. xxxiv-xxxv.

<sup>22</sup> Van Gogh says that Vinck taught this class in letters 556/445 and 558/447. The *Annual report*, though, states that the teacher was E. Dujardin, and that Vinck only gave drawing lessons from plaster ornaments and busts for the elementary course. According to Tralbaut 1948, p. 132, Vinck was standing in for Dujardin, who

was illustrating a work by Hendrik Conscience (1812-1883) at the time.

23 Matthijs van Bree, Cours de dessin, Antwerp 1821. Van Bree was director of the academy from 1827 until his death. See

Jan Lampo, Een tempel bouwen voor de muzen. Een korte geschiedenis van de Antwerpse Academie (1663-1995), extra issue of De Periscoop, April 1995, p. 15.

24 Boime 1986, pp. 27, 28 and 36.

from the outlines, whereas in Nuenen Van Gogh had pursued a system he had derived from Delacroix which was totally at odds with academic ideas. He built his figures up with large forms representing the main masses of the body and only then added the contours. It was ideally suited to his expressionist style of drawing, as demonstrated by his peasant figures from the summer of 1885 (cats. 180-192 and fig. 7). *The discus thrower* (cat. 218) is the only study after a plaster cast to have survived from the Antwerp period, and that can hardly be by chance, for despite the attention paid to the outlines the figure does not immediately strike one as an academic study, but has a robustness which links it to the Nuenen figure drawings.

In addition to the methods taught at the academy, Van Gogh probably became acquainted with various manuals, although he says nothing about them in his letters. As can be seen from the letter from Nuenen cited above, he had already got to know some of them, and there are no indications that he now came across others which he considered particularly important.

77 Rood, Alber	53 Leopold, v. Blaeklein	79 1. Klasse 9.9.1886
78 Leopold, Blaeklein	54 Leopold, v. Blaeklein	80 1. Klasse 9.9.1886
79 Louis, Col	55 Louis, Col	81 1. Klasse 9.9.1886
80 Louis, Col	56 Louis, Col	82 1. Klasse 9.9.1886
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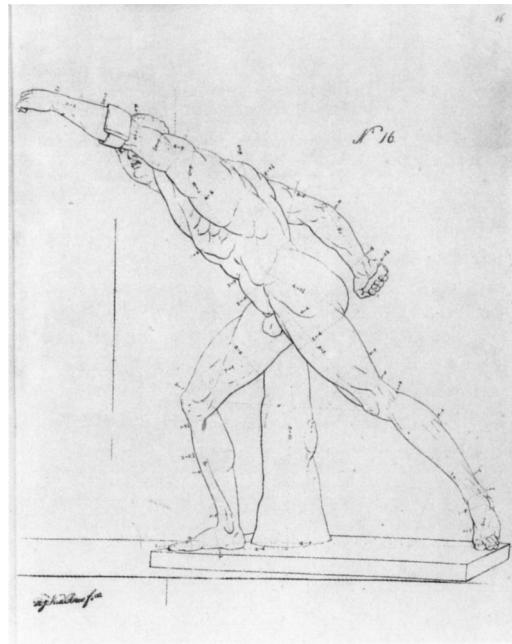
He was not very impressed by the lessons at the academy, and his lack of admiration for his teachers was mutual. At a teachers' meeting on 31 March 1886, the results of a students' competition led to 17 of them being relegated to the elementary course, among them 'Van Gogh, Vincent' (fig. 8). He was spared the humiliation, however, for by then he had been living in Paris for a month.

#### DRAWING CLUBS

Van Gogh's fellow students would have told him about the drawing clubs in the city where they worked together from the nude and draped model. It is not clear why he did not draw from the live model at the academy, but the most likely explanation is that the teachers felt that he was not yet ready, and set him to work studying plaster casts instead.

He joined two drawing clubs at the end of January 1886 (see cats. 219-224), adding to his already heavy workload. In the daytime and evenings he drew from casts in the classes taught by Siberdt and Vinck respectively, and later in the evening he went on to one of the clubs where he could study the live model. The pressure of work combined with his self-neglect undermined his health.

All the surviving Antwerp drawings from the live model were made at the drawing clubs, far from the watchful eye of a teacher. That can be seen from the results, no matter whether the model was nude or clothed, for there is not a trace of an academic approach.



6 Page from Matthijs van Bree, *Cours de dessin*, 1821. Antwerp, Koninklijke Academie voor Schone Kunsten.



7 Digger in a potato field: February, (F 1302 JH 859), 1885. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

25 Inv. d 413 V/1962.

26 Letter 570/459.

27 Letters 398/333, 399/335, 404/339  
and 408/341.

28 Letters 467/378 and 476/386a.

As with *The discus thrower* (cat. 218), Van Gogh followed the ideas he had already formed as an autodidact.

#### STYLE AND TECHNIQUE

One would only have expected to see any significant changes in Van Gogh's style in Antwerp if he had been more receptive to the academic system, or if he had stayed there long enough to form new ideas from studying the work of other artists. He remained in the city for only three months, and attended the academy for less than half that time, so it had no effect on him at all. Compared to Nuenen, there is no discernible change in his style. His main progress was in painting, and above all in portraiture, and the colouristic ideas he had developed after his visit to the Rijksmuseum were shaped even further by studying the work of the Baroque Flemish masters.

What is noteworthy is that he began making more use of coloured chalk. He had used it sparingly prior to this, but now it became more pronounced. It can be seen in the dance-hall scenes (cats. 207-209), city views (cats. 213-215), a portrait (cat. 217) and a nude (cat. 219). He preferred remarkably forceful, bold primary colours – red, blue and yellow. They matched some paints which he had bought, as he described to his brother: 'It is a real delight to me [...] to have cobalt [blue] and carmine [red], and the right kind of brilliant yellow and vermilion [red]. The most expensive colours are sometimes the cheapest, especially cobalt – the delicate tones one can get with it cannot be compared with those of any other blue' [552/441].

In other words, Van Gogh was making a colouristic change of course from his dark Nuenen palette. The coloured drawings from Antwerp, most of them sketches, should not be overrated as a new departure, but it is not inconceivable that Van Gogh did indeed use the bright, unmixed colours of the chalk to focus his ideas on the subject. This apart, though, there are no striking technical innovations in his Antwerp work.

#### TO PARIS

In one of Van Gogh's sketchbooks there is a list of times followed by place names. The latter turn out to be railway stations on the Brussels-Paris line, together with the times when the train arrived and left the towns along the route.<sup>25</sup> Around 1 March 1886 he wrote a note to his brother on a page from the same sketchbook saying that he would be in the Louvre from noon that day, or earlier if Theo preferred, and asked him to let him know when they could meet there (fig. 9).<sup>26</sup> He evidently had the note taken to Theo from a boarding house or hotel, or may have handed it in at Theo's art gallery on his way to his temporary lodgings, the address of which was probably on the lost envelope.

Van Gogh had been vaguely thinking of going to Paris for some time because of the commercial and artistic opportunities it offered. He first mentioned the idea in 1883, during his brief stay in Drenthe,<sup>27</sup> and returned to it in letters written from Nuenen.<sup>28</sup> His plan only crystallised in Antwerp, because he now had a clear goal. Dissatisfied with the teaching at the

academy, he toyed with the idea of taking lessons in the Paris studio of the history painter Fernand Cormon (1845-1924).

Cormon's name first appears in Van Gogh's correspondence in October 1884, in the letter cited above in which he spoke of studying with Stracké in Den Bosch.<sup>29</sup> He likened it to the time the painter George Breitner had worked in Cormon's studio in Paris.<sup>30</sup> His former friend had spent an intensive month at Cormon's in 1884.<sup>31</sup> Theo, who may have met Breitner in Paris, certainly knew of his stay there, for it can be deduced from a letter of Vincent's of July 1884 that he had written to him in Nuenen to tell him about it.<sup>32</sup> Van Gogh's idea of getting some academic training in Paris may have been prompted by the stories of Breitner's brief visit.

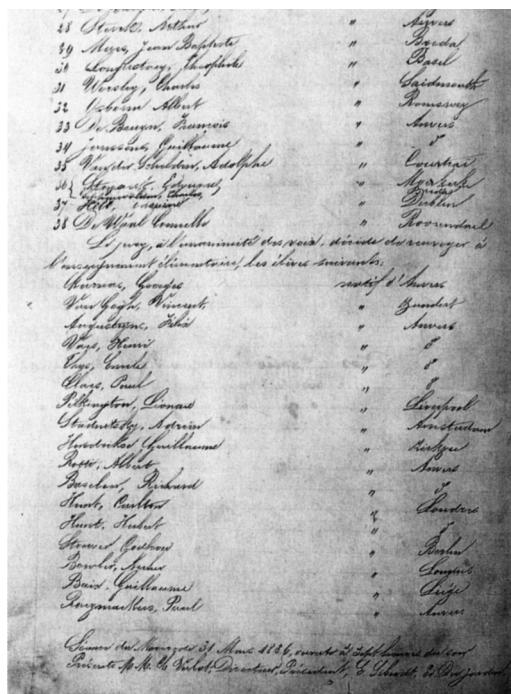
In Antwerp, Van Gogh was soon laying plans to study with Cormon. He would move in with his brother, or possibly rent a garret.<sup>33</sup> After Theo told him in early February 1886 that he agreed in principle with his plans for further study, the scheme rapidly took shape. The letter in which he reacted to Theo's approval shows that he now knew something more about the way artists worked in Paris, and more specifically in Cormon's studio. He had met a couple of Englishmen in Antwerp who had told him about their experiences there. 'One was at Gérôme's and one at Cabanel's etc. They say that one is relatively free in

29 Letter 466/381. Stracké taught drawing from the nude and modelling. See exhib. cat. De Koninklijke School herdacht. Leermeesters uit de periode 1855-1936, Den Bosch (Museum Slager) 1993.

30 *The Hague painter George Hendrik Breitner (1857-1923).*

<sup>31</sup> See, for example, *Rieta Bergsma and Paul Hefting, George Hendrik Breitner 1857-1923. Schilderijen, tekeningen, foto's. Bussum 1994*, p. 12.

32 Letter 454/372.  
33 Letter 563/452.



8 Names of the students sent down a  
class, 31 March 1886. Antwerp,  
Koninklijke Academie voor Schone  
Kunsten.

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Paris and, for instance, that one can choose one's subjects more freely than one can here, but that the correcting is indifferent. Do you know what I think? In Paris I would certainly work *more* than I do here, for instance a drawing a day or every two days. And we know, or rather you know, enough clever fellows who would not refuse to look them over and give some hints. So in fact we are on the right track anyway, whether I stay here for some time or come to you. For the rest, Cormon would probably say the same as Verlat. It is because I now have the opportunity to talk to several people about my drawings that *I see my mistakes*, and that is half the battle to overcoming them. In any event let's keep courage. But now you must write a little more and we must try to pull it off cleverly. I hear they work for four hours in the morning at Cormon's, then in the evening one can go and work at the Louvre or at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts or some other studio where drawing is done. As to the portraits, there will not be much time left for them if I want to keep up all the other things regularly. It is exactly the same here.'

<sup>34</sup> See Amsterdam 1999, pp. 39-47.

<sup>35</sup> See Van Heugten/Pabst 1995, pp. 11-29 and nos. 1-9.

<sup>36</sup> Letter 706/549.

The letters tell us that Van Gogh originally planned to go to Paris in June or July, but then he suddenly decided to leave Antwerp and arrived around 1 March instead. He moved in with Theo in the rue Laval until they took on a larger apartment at 54, rue Lepic in June (fig. 10). There was friction at times, but eventually the brothers got used to each other.<sup>34</sup> Theo was important to Vincent, because he could introduce him to artists in Paris, but at the same time Vincent was soon helping Theo widen his circle of acquaintances with avant-garde painters.

#### THE SHOCK OF THE NEW

Van Gogh had intended to start working in Cormon's studio as soon as possible, but in the event the plan to continue his training by working from plaster casts and the live model was shelved and only revived again in the autumn of 1886. The main reason for the delay must have been Van Gogh's confrontation with contemporary painting in Paris.

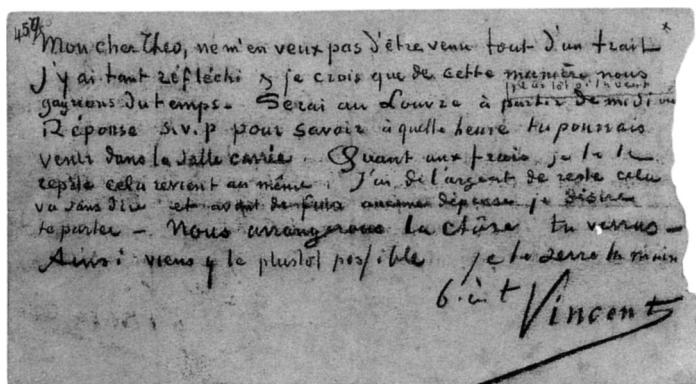
He had been trying to form an idea of Impressionism from remarks in Theo's letters. In the six months before his arrival in Paris he had lightened his palette somewhat, but even so it was far removed from what he was now seeing. His reaction is not known, but it must have been a tremendous shock. He thought that he spoke a language, but it turned out that he had merely been studying an outmoded, barely comprehensible dialect all along.

His first six months in Paris were dominated by painting, for it was in that, more than in drawing, that he had to find a way to join the mainstream of modern art. Colour had always played a pretty modest role in his works on paper, and watercolour and other coloured materials were in a distinct minority compared to pencil, black chalk, black or brown ink, or combinations of them. The goal now was colouristic innovation, so drawing was relegated to the background for the time being. Interestingly, though, when he did begin producing more finished sheets in 1887, he worked mainly in colour. The ratio was then completely reversed, with drawings in black and brown now very much in the minority. Van Gogh's overriding concern in Paris was to discover a modern palette.

Leaving aside the studies made in Cormon's studio, only a handful of the drawings discussed in this volume are datable to 1886, and none of them are very ambitious (*cats. 225-237*). A few sketches are studies for painted panoramas of Paris (*cats. 225-227*), while the others show above all that Van Gogh was adapting his subject matter to what he saw in contemporary art. Most of them are light-hearted subjects – people walking in the city's parks, and street scenes – which are recurrent themes in Impressionist art. Stylistically there is as yet little change.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS

Three small sheets appear to indicate that Van Gogh tried to make illustrations for magazines or other print media, or that he was considering producing a series of popular graphic works: *Restaurant menu* (*cat. 230*), *Woman walking her dog ('A La Villette')* (fig. 11) and *Skeleton* (*cat. 273*). He had tried to do something similar in The Hague and had vaguely thought of taking it up again when he was living in Nuenen, although that came to nothing.<sup>35</sup> When Paul Gauguin approached him in the spring of 1888 and asked him to join in a project making and publishing lithographs, he brusquely turned him down. He saw no point in the exercise, which was doomed to commercial failure. He was prepared to experiment with lithographs for his own pleasure, but felt that publishing graphic works would be pointless.<sup>36</sup> The remarkably sharp, almost aggrieved tone of the letter may have been due to painful memories of his Dutch experiences with graphics, but it is very possible that he had also been snubbed in his attempts to find work as an illustrator in Paris.



9 Note to Theo, early March 1886

[570/459]. Amsterdam, Van Gogh  
Museum.



10 Photograph of the rue Lepic (with

the rue de Maistre on the left), 1904.  
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.

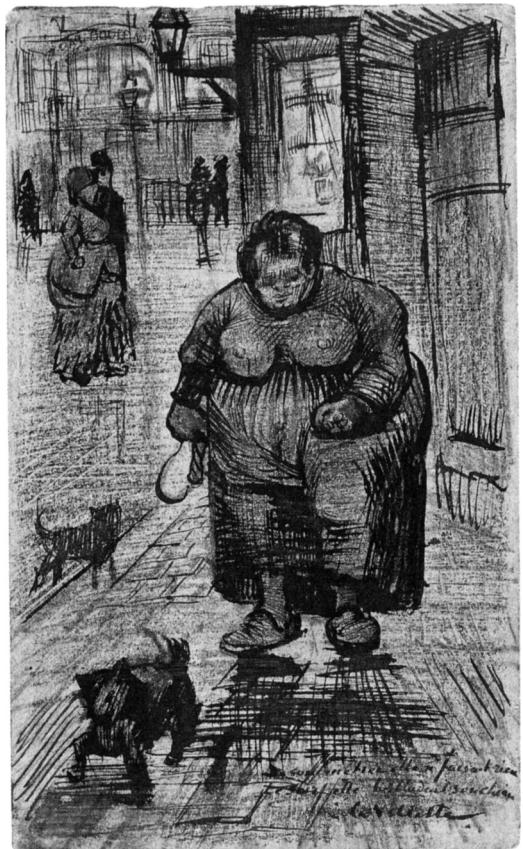
When he was painting *The potato eaters* in Nuenen and had the idea of making a lithograph of it, he had written to Theo to tell him that he thought the subject would be suitable for the magazine *Le Chat Noir*.<sup>37</sup> He must have started toying with similar ideas when he was living in Paris. Illustrating menus, theatre programmes, chansons and periodicals was a way of earning extra money for many young artists. Van Gogh drew and may also have written *Restaurant menu*, and it is possible that it was a minor exercise designed to elicit reactions.

<sup>37</sup> See letter 496/400 and Van Heugten/Pabst 1995, p. 26.

<sup>38</sup> Horace Mann Livens (1862-1936), English figure and landscape painter; letter 572/459a.

<sup>39</sup> See Han van Crimpen and Monique Berends-Albert (eds.), *De brieven van Vincent van Gogh*, 4 vols., The Hague 1990, p. 24. The introduction to the first edition of the letters is reprinted in full in this publication.

The drawing of the woman walking her dog is small but remarkably detailed, and illustrates a verse from a chanson by Aristide Bruant, part of which is written on the drawing at bottom right (see cat. 237). Here, too, Van Gogh may have been exploring his potential in this area with the idea of showing the small drawing to others. He could have been thinking of *Le Chat Noir* when he made the small sketch of a skeleton, which features a black cat.



11 Cat. 237.



12 A.S. Hartrick, Cormon's studio  
(watercolour after a photograph), before  
1939. From: Hartrick 1939, facing p.  
48.

#### IN CORMON'S STUDIO

The lack of documentation makes it unclear precisely when Van Gogh studied with Cormon, but since it is very important for the dating of his Paris œuvre it will be discussed here at some length. Fernand Cormon's personality and teaching methods are examined in the entries on the studies of nude models (*cats. 238-250*) and of plaster casts (*cats. 251-271*) which Van Gogh made in his studio (fig. 12).

In a letter to a friend from his Antwerp days, the Englishman Horace Livens, Van Gogh said that he had studied with Cormon for three or four months, but is not really clear when that was.<sup>38</sup> Jo van Gogh-Bonger, Theo's widow, noted in her introduction to the 1914 edition of the letters, that when Vincent moved in to his brother's cramped apartment in the rue Laval, the lack of a studio forced him to work at Cormon's in the daytime for the first few months after his arrival in early March 1886. She said that he stopped doing so after the brothers moved to the rue Lepic, partly because he was dissatisfied with the teaching and partly because he now had a studio of his own.<sup>39</sup> Van Gogh-Bonger, though, was not an eyewitness, and may have noted down nothing more than what she remembered from stories told by Theo more than two decades previously.

Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov suggested in 1976 that Van Gogh's time with Cormon may have been split up into two periods: the first before the summer of 1886, when an angry Cormon closed the studio for several months in high dudgeon at the remarks of one of his students, and the second in the autumn.<sup>40</sup> She revised that view in 1988, arguing that Van Gogh only worked there in the autumn.<sup>41</sup>

Van Gogh's letter to Horace Livens has often been used to establish when that period of study finished. It is not dated, but for a long time it was assigned to August-October 1886. Welsh-Ovcharov first suspected that it was written a couple of months later, in the late autumn,<sup>42</sup> but then suggested that it should be dated to the late summer of the following year, 1887, although she failed to appreciate all the consequences of that redating.<sup>43</sup> It is indeed very likely that the letter was written in the late summer or autumn of 1887, as can be deduced from comparison with a letter which Van Gogh wrote to his sister Wil which can be dated firmly to the summer or autumn of 1887 on internal evidence. Vincent told Wil that he had done little more in 1886 than study colour by painting flower still lifes. As a result, he had been able to put considerably more colour in the landscapes he painted at Asnières in the summer of 1887.<sup>44</sup> In his letter to Livens he speaks of a dozen landscapes, which he says were 'frankly green, frankly blue'. Such a large series can only be the group of landscapes which, given the colours he mentions, was made in the spring and summer of 1887, possibly at Asnières. In both letters Van Gogh also speaks of his plans to go south, in February or even earlier, as he wrote to Livens. He did so in February 1888, so both letters must date from around the same time, the summer or autumn of 1887, which means that the one to Livens no longer provides a date for the end of Van Gogh's period with Cormon. His vagueness about the length of it, 'three or four months', also indicates that some time had passed since he left the studio.

<sup>40</sup> Welsh-Ovcharov 1976, pp. 209-12.

<sup>41</sup> Paris 1988, pp. 16-17.

<sup>42</sup> Welsh-Ovcharov 1976, pp. 211-212.

<sup>43</sup> Paris 1988, Appendix 4 on p. 377.

<sup>44</sup> See letter 576/W1.

45 Hartrick 1939, p. 40.

46 Welsh-Ovcharov 1976, p. 211.

47 Bernard 1952, p. 14: 'Je vis là pour la première fois Vincent Van Gogh, qui peignait'.

48 Van Gogh Museum archives, inv. b 942 V/1962.

49 It still exists today, but was renamed the Lycée Jacques Decour after the Second World War.

50 The Collège Rollin is listed in the Almanach de Commerce (the Bottin) of 1888 under the heading 'Lycées'.

A number of artists whom Van Gogh met in Paris have spoken about his time with Cormon. One has to treat their reminiscences with caution, because they were often written down many years later. Archibald Standish Hartrick (1864-1950), who himself only began to work in Cormon's studio early in 1887, says that Van Gogh was there in the spring of 1886, but he was basing that on the recollections of others.<sup>45</sup> A more reliable source is Emile Bernard (1868-1941), who had studied with Cormon in early 1886 before going on a trip to Brittany in April. Dated works of his with Breton subjects show that he remained there until September at least,<sup>46</sup> so he was away from Paris for around six months. When he returned he paid a visit to his friends in Cormon's studio, where he saw a new face: 'It was there that I first saw Vincent van Gogh, who was painting'.<sup>47</sup> That recollection is so precise that considerable weight can be attached to it.

All the same, the possibility that Van Gogh's time at Cormon's was split into two cannot be entirely ruled out: briefly in the early summer until Cormon closed the studio, and for a slightly longer period in the autumn. However, there is no real evidence for this theory, and in fact it is undermined by a letter which Theo wrote to his parents shortly after the brothers had moved to the rue Lepic in June. He told them several bits of good news about Vincent but makes no mention of his having studied at Cormon's,<sup>48</sup> which he very probably would have done if that had been the case. In other words, a period in the studio prior to the summer of 1886 becomes an even remoter possibility.

Another reason for placing the period of study later in the year is Van Gogh's concentration on painting still lifes of flowers. As he wrote to his sister Wil, that was his main preoccupation in 1886, and inevitably he found flowers more difficult to come by in the autumn and even impossible as winter approached, so it is highly likely that he began thinking of pursuing some other artistic activities. An important piece of evidence supporting that theory is a small painting of a little girl of whom Van Gogh made several drawings in Cormon's studio (*cats. 245-247*), for it is painted over a flower still life, as can be seen in an X-ray photograph (fig. 13).

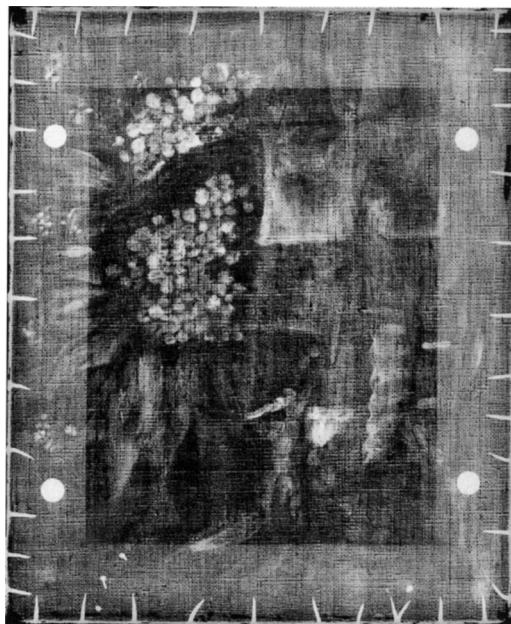
If the surviving drawings which Van Gogh made at Cormon's are an accurate reflection of his output there, he was sticking to his plan of working mainly with plaster casts. In fact, the balance tilts even further towards the casts than was hitherto thought, for one sheet can no longer be attributed to Van Gogh (*Appendix 2, no. 2.3*), while six scenes of what has always been regarded as a young man (*cats. 253-255, 262, 263, 268*) turn out to be studies of a plaster cast, the *Idol*. In all there are 12 nude studies, not counting a drawing of feet (*cat. 250*) which could have belonged either to a live model or to a cast, as against 21 of casts. That Van Gogh found drawing from casts useful is demonstrated by a second series of studies which he made at home (*cats. 276-286*).

Two of the sketchbooks contain indications that he visited another academic institution. Written in the first one is the name 'Académie Rollins', which must be a reference to the Collège Rollin on the avenue Trudaine.<sup>49</sup> The second contains two rapid sketches of a small skeleton in an oddly stooped pose. A photograph of the interior of the Collège Rollin

taken in 1907 shows a very similar skeleton of a monkey in the college's natural history collection (fig. 307b), so that is very probably where Van Gogh made those small studies. He may have heard about the Collège Rollin, a municipal institute, from Paul Signac, who had received his first artistic training there. Van Gogh was probably interested in the college's collection of stuffed animals, which accounts for his visits (see also cats. 307-310), but it had no great influence on his work.<sup>50</sup>

#### THE HUMAN FIGURE NEGLECTED

Van Gogh left Antwerp for Paris in order to learn more about the human figure. He had always wanted to, and in The Hague and Nuenen this had resulted in numerous studies of figures, heads and hands. Although it was not always easy to get models he was reasonably successful in finding people to pose for a small fee, that is until a Catholic priest in Nuenen put a stop to it. Compared to that, his output during his two years in Paris was very meagre indeed: 11 figures drawn in Cormon's studio and, now that two other works have been removed from the œuvre in this catalogue (Appendix 2, nos. 2.3 and 2.6), no more than five other figure studies (cats. 272, 287, 301, 302, 305), some of which are very hasty indeed. Four portraits are not included in the total (cats. 298, 299, 306, 322). With a certain amount of gen-



13 X-ray photograph of *Seated girl*  
(F 215 JH 1045), 1886-87. Amsterdam,  
Van Gogh Museum.

erosity one could add six studies of musicians, although they are really no more than swift sketches (*cats. 293-297, 300*). One finds the same pattern with the paintings. There are about ten works which could be described with some justice as figure pieces, and that total only rises slightly if one includes the portraits (but not the self-portraits).

What had happened to Van Gogh's plans to study the human figure? He himself started the myth that he could never get any models, a complaint which regularly recurs in the letters. 'I have lacked money for painting models, else I had given myself entirely to figure painting', was how he put it in the letter he wrote to Livens from Paris [572/459a]. It is an assertion which has some credibility when it came to painting, for that is a more time-consuming and expensive discipline than drawing, because the models have to pose longer and thus cost more. However, it certainly does not apply to drawings. It is very hard to believe that Van Gogh had trouble finding and paying for models in Paris of all places. He was living in Montmartre with his moneyed and generous brother, in surroundings which could hardly have been more artistic and were also home to numerous models whom he could have hired together with his artist friends. Another option was to persuade friends and acquaintances to pose for him, just as he had coaxed a peasant family to act as the models for *The potato eaters* for hours on end.

A more credible explanation is that the shift in Van Gogh's priorities was dictated not by a lack of opportunity but by the necessity of making choices. As far as his drawings from the model in Antwerp and Paris are concerned, he must have felt that there was less to learn than he had hoped, or that his unorthodox working method had progressed too far and his artistic maturity was too great for him blindly to follow the advice of others. As was customary in academic teaching, Cormon laid great stress on getting the outlines and proportions right. Writing from Arles, Vincent reminded Theo that he utterly disagreed with Cormon's view that everything had to be measured.<sup>51</sup> The academic system did not sit well with him, and he relied more on his own principles, which he had derived from Delacroix. They suited his artistic intuition and temperament, as well as his desire for a vigorous, expressive style. There is hardly a trace of Cormon's methods in the studies of plaster casts and models made in his studio. Van Gogh's reaction against Cormon in his letters speaks of self-confidence. It is the tone of an artist who had come to the conclusion that although his work might be different from his teacher's, it was at least as good and probably better.

There may have been another factor at play. Van Gogh had been teaching himself for many years and had had little or no contact with other artists, certainly after he settled in Nuenen, where Anthon van Rappard was the only artist he kept in touch with. His daily points of reference were the books, prints and illustrations with which he surrounded himself. They included graphic works by or after very skilled draughtsmen like Hubert Herkomer, Luke Fildes, Paul Renouard and Honoré Daumier. Books like his favourite *Grammaire des arts du dessin* by Charles Blanc provided him with models by great masters like Rembrandt, Raphael and Michelangelo (fig. 14). It goes without saying that a young

artist wants to see how great masters tackle particular problems, but by restricting himself to masterpieces and avoiding confrontation with lesser talents, Van Gogh had developed a skewed view of art. His own control of the human figure appeared weak compared to the artists he admired, but neither his teachers in Antwerp nor Cormon could match up to his high expectations. He had a far better command of the human figure than he had originally thought. He believed that he would have to pay a lot of attention to it, but it turned out there was no need.

52 *See Drawings 1, p. 26.*

#### COLOUR

A third reason why there are so few figure pieces from the Paris period mainly applies to the paintings, but it had repercussions for the drawings as well. It is a simple fact that the figure piece is not the ideal genre for experimenting with bold colours. It presents certain specific difficulties: finding a suitable model, deciding on the subject, getting the model to take up the right pose, and arranging the colours with the aid of costume, background and foreground. There are fewer problems with the *mise en scène* in other genres. That was why Van Gogh started in Paris by painting still lifes of flowers before moving on to city views and landscapes. In his Hague period he had stubbornly rejected Theo's advice to work in colour, even though it was more attractive commercially. He wanted to concentrate on drawing figures and not complicate matters by introducing colouristic problems.<sup>52</sup> In Paris the priorities were reversed. That selective approach mainly concerned paintings, but the restriction in genres meant that in 1887 most of the drawings were city views which were sometimes closely related to paintings.



14 Charles Blanc, *Grammaire des arts du dessin*, Paris 1867, pp. 582, 583.



15 Photograph of the Le Blute-fin windmill, c. 1900. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

## VIEWS OF THE CITY

The city and its more rural outskirts were the subject of two series of drawings in 1887. The first, executed in various techniques, dates from the late winter or early spring of that year and consists of four works: *A guinguette* (cat. 289), *The boulevard de Clichy* (cat. 290), *View from the apartment in the rue Lepic* (cat. 291) and *Gardens on Montmartre and the Blute-fin windmill* (cat. 292). They are subjects which Van Gogh found in Montmartre, such as the old windmills which stood near the brothers' apartment, and they also feature in several paintings (fig. 15).

<sup>53</sup> Up to and including the Arles period, Van Gogh usually signed successful paintings and drawings which he considered saleable, and occasionally gave them titles. He also added a signature to most of the works he gave away to other people. He all but abandoned signing works in Saint-Rémy and Auvers-sur-Oise.

<sup>54</sup> See Drawings 1, pp. 18-25, and Drawings 2, pp. 18-22.

<sup>55</sup> He also used a perspective frame in Nuenen. His Hague frame had a grid of horizontal and vertical threads. See the preceding note.

A number of those drawings have painted counterparts (figs. 16, 17). At first sight the scenes look identical, but in every case the vantage points, perspective and details are so different that the works must have been conceived separately. The drawings were not preliminary studies for the paintings, nor were they copies of them. It is possible that Van Gogh wanted to produce saleable works in both techniques. The size and degree of finish of the drawings points in that direction, but against that not one of them is signed, as one would expect of a work made for sale.<sup>53</sup>

The second series of city views, which dates from the summer of 1887, consists of seven watercolours which fall into two groups. There are two smaller works made on Montmartre (cats. 319, 320), five larger sheets with four scenes of the Paris ramparts, and a view from Montmartre looking out over the suburbs (fig. 18). Two of those five sheets are in the Van Gogh Museum (cats. 317, 318).

The seven watercolours are attractive, brightly coloured scenes which one would certainly have expected to find buyers. None of them, though, passed into other hands during Van Gogh's lifetime (see cat. 317).

There are no pure landscape drawings in which the city does not feature. Van Gogh's trips to Asnières did result in a whole series of painted landscapes, but the only works on paper from this *faubourg* are a large study of the De la Sirène restaurant and a preliminary study for a watercolour or painting of a sailing boat (cats. 312, 313).

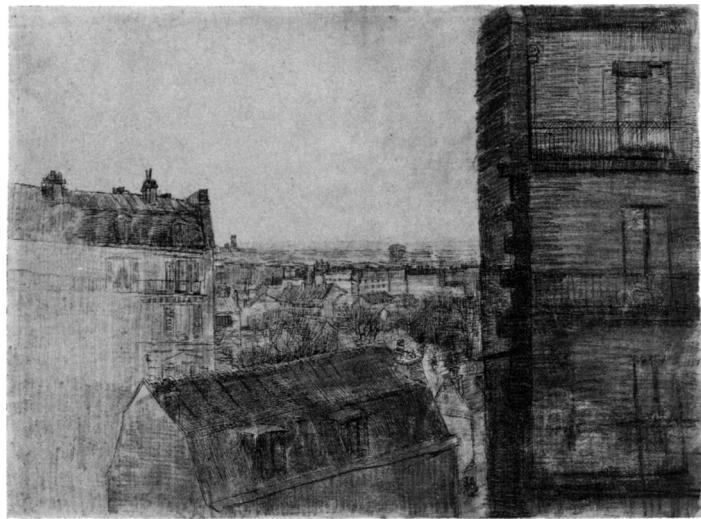
## THE PERSPECTIVE FRAME

In many of Van Gogh's Paris paintings there are assisting lines which betray the use of a perspective frame. They can be seen with the aid of infrared reflectography, or even with the naked eye in some cases. As he had done back in Holland, he included both the frame and the lines of the threads stretched in it.<sup>54</sup> In Paris he used a frame with a horizontal, a vertical and two diagonal threads crossing in the middle.<sup>55</sup> Only very rarely, though, does one find similar indications that he used that aid in the drawings, cases in point being the city views made in the summer of 1887 (cats. 318-320). In the Nuenen drawings, too, those lines only appear sporadically. However, the drawn œuvre from Paris, more so than that from the Dutch period, contains scenes in which one would certainly expect to come across those lines, such as the large, detailed study *Sailing boat on the Seine at Asnières* (cat. 312), the perspective of which is by no means straightforward, and the studies for his

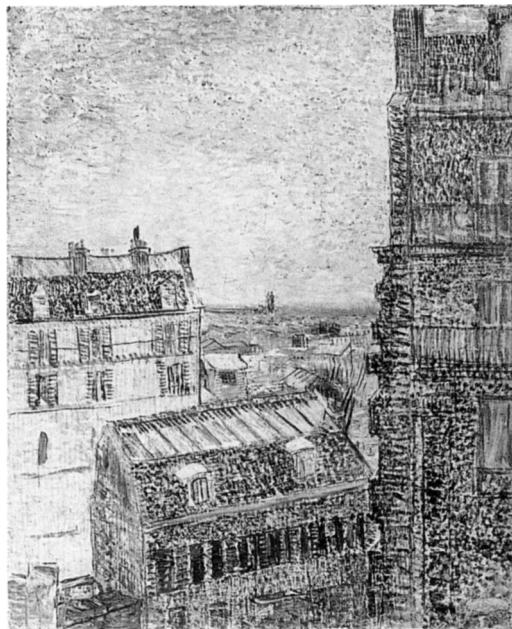
watercolours of the Paris ramparts (*cats. 315, 316*). Van Gogh had no reason to remove the assisting lines in these drawings, because they were not fully fledged works in their own right but preparatory studies for scenes in other media. One would expect him to have carefully removed those lines in the accomplished city views, but that is precisely where one finds traces of them (*cats. 318-320*).

Even more surprisingly, there are perspectively complex scenes of which there is a drawn and a painted variant in which assisting lines are found in the painting and not in the drawing. An example of this is *View from the apartment in the rue Lepic* (figs. 16, 17). There is not a sign of the lines in the drawing, but an infrared reflectogram of the painting shows a complete frame extending over the entire scene.

There are no indications in this sheet, or in others, that Van Gogh used a rubber eraser. When lines are erased parts of other pencil strokes are unintentionally removed



16 Cat. 291.



17 *View from the apartment in the rue*

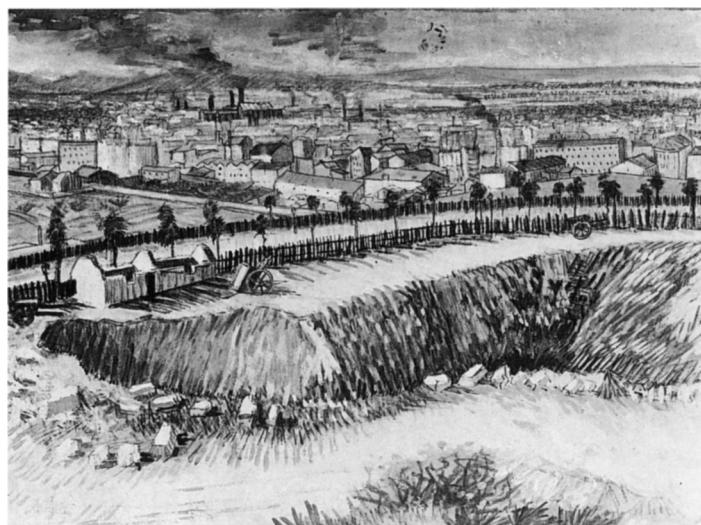
*Lepic* (F 341 JH 1242), 1887.

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

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as well, but that is not the case. Nor are there any areas where the eraser has left a sheen, as happens with some kinds of paper. Even if Van Gogh drew the assisting lines thinly with a soft pencil (or with a material that was so powdery that it only attached itself to the surface lightly and could be easily brushed off), one would expect that faint traces would still remain, but there are none.

There are two possible explanations for the lack of assisting lines, and what they have in common is that there is no evidence to support them. In the first place it is conceivable that Van Gogh was unhappy about his dependence on the perspective frame (it might even have attracted comments from his friends and colleagues in Paris) and wanted to practise doing without it. The more highly finished the drawing or painting, the greater the risk of such a free approach, for they would have been easier to sell and had to be utterly convincing, so he would have been better off abandoning his aid for less pretentious works.



18 *View from Montmartre* (F 1410  
JH 1286), 1887. Amsterdam, Stedelijk  
Museum.

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The second explanation is that Van Gogh had found a way of dispensing with assisting lines drawn on the paper. It is possible that he placed a sheet with bold, black lines beneath the one he was working on. In the case of the scene with the sailing boat (*cat. 312*) and the complex structures in the studies for the watercolours of the Paris ramparts (*cats. 315, 316*), the paper is certainly thin enough for such lines to have shown through.

#### TECHNICAL EXPERIMENTS

The more Van Gogh progressed as an artist, developing a preference for certain drawing materials, the fewer his technical experiments. His drive for innovation was limited in Paris, with the most notable exceptions dating from the first half of 1887. Coloured chalk, which he had only really begun using in Antwerp, is found in some of the Paris drawings, sometimes in coarsely dashed-off studies like the heads of the musicians (*cats. 293-297*), and sometimes delicately, almost searchingly, as in *Gardens on Montmartre and the Blute-fin windmill* (*cat. 292*). That he had developed a certain liking for this material emerges from an anecdote told by Hartrick, who said that when he got to know him, Van Gogh always had large pieces of coloured chalk in his pockets with which he drew sketches of his recent work to show his friends (see *cat. 288*).

In *Window in the Bataille restaurant* (*cat. 288*) and *The boulevard de Clichy* (*cat. 290*) he experimented with the combination of pen and ink and coloured chalk. It was not a happy marriage, with the delicate pen lines being overwhelmed by the broad strokes of the brightly coloured chalk. Van Gogh evidently came to his own conclusions after making these two experiments, for he never tried the combination again.

He occasionally drew on coloured paper in Nuenen and Antwerp, and did so a few times in Paris as well. Three of the drawings from the early part of 1887 are on blue paper: *Window in the Bataille restaurant* (*cat. 288*), *A guinguette* (*cat. 289*) and *The boulevard de Clichy* (*cat. 290*). The blue has now largely or completely faded out of the paper, but in the latter two works it originally played an important part in the colour composition.

The watercolours from the summer of 1887 are a new aspect of Van Gogh's work. They differ markedly from his earlier efforts in the medium, which look almost murky by comparison. For almost all of those sheets he had used opaque watercolour, sometimes highly diluted. He did the same in the Paris watercolours, but now combined it with truly transparent watercolour. It was only in that way that he could obtain the bright, almost luminous colours of these sheets.

One new development is the extensive use of the pen prior to the application of the watercolour. It had not been a success in the chalk drawings just mentioned, but in combination with the far more subtle watercolour the result was far happier, even if the solubility of the ink did mean that it ran occasionally. Partly as a result of the pen, those watercolours have an amount of detail not found in the earlier ones.

The pen was combined with other materials in many of the Paris sheets, but whereas Van Gogh had produced stunning pen drawings in Nuenen (*cats. 89-91, 94, 95*) the Paris

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œuvre is signally lacking in works in which it predominates. Leaving aside a few small studies, he made only two fully finished works with the pen: *A guinguette* (cat. 289) and *View from the apartment in the rue Lepic* (cat. 291). He must have known that his mastery of it was such that it hardly required any further work. That special affinity is already evident in the early pen drawings, particularly the landscapes (fig. 19). This led him to make clear choices in Paris, undertaking colouristic experiments in his drawings which are not found in his earlier works on paper. Coloured drawings remained in a distinct minority for a long time after he left Paris. It was only in Auvers-sur-Oise that a relatively large number of his grander works are in colour again.

56 See cat. 287 and *Saint Louis 2001, passim.*

57 His collection of 477 prints is now in the Van Gogh Museum.

#### STYLISTIC DEVELOPMENTS AND INFLUENCES

The tempestuous development and variety of experiments in Van Gogh's Paris paintings bear no relation to the fluent evolution of his draughtsmanship towards an Impressionist manner while he was there. The main problems confronting him – use of colour and brushwork – lay chiefly in the realm of painting. He tried to impart a Neo-impressionist effect to a few figure drawings by working with fuzzy contours (cats. 301, 302, 306), but he probably did this with an eye to paintings in the modern style which he intended to base on them. In contrast to the canvases, there is not a single Pointillist drawing.

Equally, one cannot point to the unequivocal influence of any of his artist friends. Van Gogh associated with Signac, Toulouse-Lautrec, Bernard, Gauguin, Seurat, the Pissarros, father and son, and others. The intensity of those contacts, in so far as it is known, varied markedly in each case. He worked a great deal with Paul Signac in Asnières in the spring of 1887, producing a series of paintings but, as already noted, only two drawings (cats. 312, 313). The closeness of the ties between Van Gogh and other young artists is demonstrated by the group exhibition he organised in the Du Chalet restaurant at the end of 1887, which featured works by Bernard, Anquetin, Signac and Gauguin as well as himself. He described these avant-garde painters as the artists of the Petit Boulevard.<sup>56</sup> Several of them left a clear mark on the artistic development of his paintings, but no overriding influence of individual artists can be detected in the drawings.

During his first six months in Paris, before he entered Cormon's studio to draw from plaster casts and the live model, Van Gogh concentrated almost exclusively on painting. His drawings from the whole of 1886 differ in style from those he made in Nuenen and Antwerp. Many of them are well-observed sketches in the forceful hand he had developed in the preceding years.

He drew extensively in 1887, up to and including the summer, and his manner gradually became freer, the draughtsmanship looser, the lines less heavy, and when he used colours they were clear and usually bold. The city views from the summer of 1887 were the landmarks in this respect, and they also display the influence which Japanese prints were having on his Paris work. He had discovered those woodcuts in Antwerp, but it was only in Paris, when he began collecting them, that they left their mark on his art.<sup>57</sup> Once

again this is more apparent in the paintings, but the summery watercolours (*cats. 317-320*) were clearly inspired by Ukiyo-e graphics. The compositions, use of colour and the way in which small, lively figures populate the scenes strongly recall the Japanese archetypes. A drawing with the portrait of Père Tanguy (*cat. 322*) also owes much to Van Gogh's knowledge of oriental art.

Van Gogh stopped drawing almost altogether after the summer of 1887. He had clearly made a breakthrough in his painting, and the potential he saw in it demanded all his attention. As far as working on paper was concerned, he must have felt certain that he had mastered the discipline. In February 1888, tired of the frenetic life of Paris, he left for rural Arles, where his virtuosity as a draughtsman reached its peak.



19 *Marsh with water lilies* (F 845 JH 7),

1881. Richmond, Virginia Museum of

Fine Arts (Collection of Mr. and Mrs.

Paul Mellon).

# Note to the reader

Each catalogue entry consists of three sections: technical description, discussion and documentation. The latter is broken down into provenance, relevant letters by Van Gogh, literature and exhibitions. Reference is made only to those letters in which Van Gogh specifically mentions the drawing in question. The literature is restricted to publications that make a substantive contribution to our knowledge of the drawing. The other parts of the documentary section are as exhaustive as possible.

References to publication and exhibitions are given in abbreviated form. The full titles and exhibition details will be found at the back of the book.

Data on the provenance and exhibitions are based on the 1970 œuvre catalogue by J.-B. de la Faille. The museum archives, in the form of exhibition catalogues, archive cards, newspaper cuttings, annotations by Johanna van Gogh-Bonger and Vincent Willem van Gogh, and other documents, are the source of any supplementary information or corrections to De la Faille.

If it is known when Van Gogh sent a particular drawing to his brother, Theo is listed in the provenance as the owner from that year. Where no such information is available he is regarded as the owner from 1890, the year of Vincent's death.

Vincent Willem van Gogh, the son of Theo van Gogh and Johanna van Gogh-Bonger, was the formal owner of the Van Gogh Collection from 1891, but since his mother had custody of it until her death in 1925, her name precedes his in the provenances.

Displays of parts of the collection in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam in the period when it was housed there (c. 1931-73) are not included in the list of exhibitions.

Documents and literature listed in the separate exhibitions section provide information about the exhibition in question or are essential for identifying the work exhibited. In addition to the inventory numbers of documents (for which the data will be found in a list at the back of the book), the following abbreviations have been used: ASM (Archives of the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam) and BSM (loan form of the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam). New information on exhibition dates is not marked as such.

If known, the prices asked for the works at a commercial exhibition (or the words 'not for sale') follow the exhibition catalogue numbers. The sums (or 'not for sale') are set within square brackets when they are known from documents; the use of parentheses indicates that the information comes from the exhibition catalogue. If sales catalogues and documents with lists of the exhibited works do not specify the price, this is interpreted as meaning 'not for sale'.

Wherever possible, Van Gogh's works bear the titles that he himself gave them. In all other cases they have been given straightforward, descriptive titles.

A distinction is made throughout between transparent and opaque watercolour. The term 'gouache' has been avoided for technical reasons. For further information on this point see note 24 in the Introduction to Volume 1.

The material used for the signature is only specified if it differs from that in which the drawing was executed.

Inscriptions on the backs of the drawings are only recorded when they are considered relevant.

The present owner of each work is listed in the provenance section. By far the majority of the drawings are in the collection of the Vincent van Gogh Foundation, but a small number belong to the Van Gogh Museum itself. All the works from the Van Gogh Museum reproduced in the comparative illustrations are from the collection of the Vincent van Gogh Foundation, as are the documents in the museum. The works belonging to the Vincent van Gogh Foundation are on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum.

The quotations from the letters have been checked against the original manuscripts and corrected where necessary. They are followed by two numbers within square brackets. Where information from the letters is used in the text without quotation marks, the letter numbers will be found in a note. The first of the two numbers refers to Han van Crimpen and Monique Berends-Albert (eds.), *De brieven van Vincent van Gogh*, 4 vols., The Hague 1990, and the second to *The complete letters of Vincent van Gogh*, 3 vols., Greenwich (Conn.) 1958. All the quotations from the English edition have been checked by the present translator and revised where necessary.

The F numbers in the texts refer to the relevant catalogue numbers in J.-B. de la Faille, *The works of Vincent van Gogh. His paintings and drawings*, Amsterdam 1970; the JH numbers to Jan Hulsker, *The new complete Van Gogh. Paintings, drawings, sketches*, Amsterdam & Philadelphia 1996.

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# Catalogue

The documentation in the catalogue entries was  
compiled by Monique Hageman.

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## 207-209 Sketches in a dance-hall

<sup>1</sup> In Brabant, Van Gogh had been falsely accused of fathering a child on a woman who regularly posed for him. A Catholic priest then ordered his parishioners to stop posing for the artist. For more details of this affair see *Drawings 2*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> See letters 549/438 and 551/440.

Antwerp made a great impression on Van Gogh, judging by the letters he wrote to his brother Theo. In addition to visiting museums and art dealers, he passed his time by going on exploratory expeditions [547/346]. He found the busy docks particularly attractive (fig. 207a). 'The various dockyards and warehouses on the quays are splendid. I have walked along the docks and the quays several times already, in all directions. Especially when one comes from the sand and the heath and the quiet of a peasant village, and has been in none but quiet surroundings for a long time, the contrast is odd. It is an unfathomable confusion' [548/437]. He immediately saw the possibility of producing city views and pieces with figures. 'I mean, the figures are always in action, one sees them in the strangest surroundings, everything distorted, and time and again interesting contrasts crop up of their own accord' [548/437].

It had become impossible for him to make any more figure studies in Nuenen,<sup>1</sup> and the need to do so was one of the main reasons for his moving to Antwerp at the end of November 1885. His plans were given an extra fillip when he discovered that the Antwerp art dealers had little of this genre on offer and realised that he had found a gap in the market.<sup>2</sup> When he first

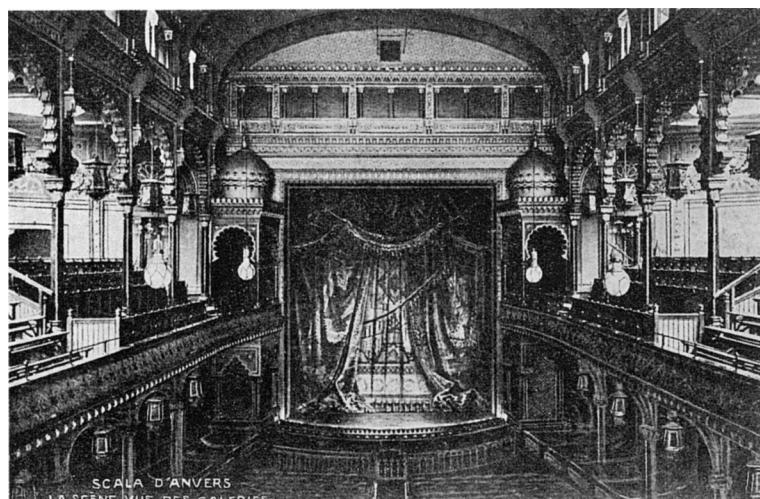


207a Edmond Fierlants, photograph of the Willemssdok, 1860. Antwerp, Ronny van de Velde.

arrived, of course, he had not yet had time to find models to come and sit for him, so he had to content himself by making sketches of people in public places which he could incorporate in more detailed compositions later on. 'Yesterday I was at the Café-Concert Scala, which is a bit like the Folies Bergères; I found it very dull, and of course hackneyed – but the public amused me. There were splendid women's heads, really extraordinarily fine, among the good middle-class folk in the back seats, and on the whole I think what they say about Antwerp is true, that the women are handsome' [549/438].<sup>3</sup>

Even more to his taste were the dance-halls in the docks, which were mainly frequented by sailors. 'One evening I saw a sailors' dance-hall at the docks; it was most interesting and they behaved *very decently*. However, that will not be the case at all those halls. Here, for instance, nobody was drunk, or drank much. There were some very handsome girls, the most beautiful of whom was plain-faced. I mean, one figure who struck me as a splendid Jordaens or Velazquez, or Goya, was in black silk, probably a barmaid or something of the kind, with an ugly and irregular face but lively and piquant à la Frans Hals. She danced superbly in an old-fashioned way. Once she danced with a well-to-do little farmer who carried a big green

<sup>3</sup> Scala, which opened in Anneessensstraat in 1884, was more than just a dance-hall, being a venue for singers, circus acrobats and boxers as well; see Frans Lauwers, *Uitbundig Antwerpen. Horeca en uitgaansleven in vervlogen tijden*, Ljubljana 1997, p. 8. By 1885 it had become one of the city's most popular places of entertainment, meriting a listing in the 'Wetenswaardige bijzonderheden en inlichtingen' on p. 142 of *Gids 1885*, which was published to coincide with the World Exhibition of 1885.



207<sup>b</sup> Photograph of Café-Concert Scala, 1905. Merksem, Frans Lauwers Collection.

4 Visitors often had to pay a dance fee in addition to the admission charge. It was usually collected on the dance floor, with the music being stopped halfway through a number and then restarted after the money had been collected. See Lauwers, *op cit.*

(noot 3), p. 30.

5 These were mechanical organs which, in addition to their usual sound, could reproduce those of many other musical instruments. See *Johan de Boose, exhib. cat.*

Muziek met gaatjes. Een tentoonstelling van pneumatische dansorgels, *Antwerp (Stadsfeestzaal) 1993*, p. 2.

6 We are grateful to Frieda Sorber of the Provinciaal Textielmuseum at Ranst (Oelegem) in België, who kindly supplied descriptions of the items of clothing in Van Gogh's painted and drawn œuvre from Antwerp and Paris.

umbrella under his arm, even when waltzing amazingly quickly. Other girls with ordinary jackets and skirts and red scarves; sailors and cabin-boys etc., all very agreeable. Pensioned-off sea-captain types who came to watch. Very genuine. It does one good to see folk really enjoying themselves' [549/438].

Van Gogh continued visiting places of entertainment of this kind throughout December 1885, as he said in a letter written at the end of the month: 'I still go often to those dance-halls, to see the heads of the women and the heads of the sailors and soldiers. One pays the entrance fee of 20 or 30 centimes, and drinks a glass of beer, for they drink very little spirits, and one can amuse oneself greatly for a whole evening, at least I do, watching the high spirits of these people' [553/442].<sup>4</sup>

These three are the only surviving drawings of Antwerp dance-halls which Van Gogh made during his first month in the city. Their sketchiness makes it impossible to identify the setting, but it was certainly not Scala, which had an interior decorated in a Moorish style (fig. 207b). The most likely location is one of the halls mentioned in the letters. That all three drawings were made in the same location is evident from the identical, rectangular balcony boxes visible in the upper right corner in the *Dance-hall* (cat. 207) and *Couple dancing* (cat. 208), and behind the woman on the right in *Two women in a balcony box* (cat. 209). In the latter sheet people can be seen over the edge of the box, perhaps dancing on the floor below.

Only the *Dance-hall* shows the interior in full. The dance floor is in the middle of the hall, with seats for spectators ranged along the wall on the right and at the back. The room is closed off on the right by balconies on two tiers. There also appears to be a box with spectators in the left background. In the middle of the back wall there is an organ, which provided the music in Belgian dance-halls of this kind.<sup>5</sup>

The sketchy nature of the drawings makes it impossible to say what the people are wearing. In one of the above quotations Van Gogh mentions a woman in a black silk dress, and girls wearing jackets and skirts and red scarves. The latter item of clothing is shown in both scenes with dancing figures. The two women in cat. 209 are dressed in black and each has a dark-coloured, capote hat on her head. This consisted of a wire framework decorated with lace, silk ribbons or velvet, and was very popular with working-class women at the end of the 19th century.<sup>6</sup>

The three sheets all come from the same, lost sketchbook as cats. 210-213. The six surviving pages (with a total of seven drawings) are roughly the same size. There are slight variations only in the length of the long sides, which will be due to a lack of care when removing them from the



207 Dance-hall



208 Couple dancing



209 Two women in a balcony box

<sup>7</sup> Cat. 209 was bound in on the right, cats. 207 and 208 on the left.

<sup>8</sup> Van Gogh may have used coloured pencils, but because they consist largely of chalk it is impossible to distinguish between the two materials with the naked eye. The term coloured chalk is used here for the sake of simplicity.

sketchbook.<sup>7</sup> Examination of the versos makes it possible to say something about the original sequence of the sheets in the book and their chronology. On the back of the *Couple dancing*, for example, there is an offset of the left half of the *Dance-hall* (fig. 207c), from which it can be concluded that this was their order in the sketchbook. The offset occurred when Van Gogh drew the *Couple dancing*, which he did with such force that part of the underlying *Dance-hall*, which was drawn first, was transferred to the back of the sheet. The pressure exerted on the lines on the floor in the *Couple dancing* passed right through to the back of the *Dance-hall*, picking up blue chalk from an unknown scene on the following sheet. *Couple dancing* and the *Dance-hall* were probably cut out of the sketchbook at the same time, since both have a concave edge on the left. They may have shifted a little relative to each other when they were being cut out, for the edges are not a precise fit.

All the studies of the dance-hall were laid down with a soft black chalk, which is lightly stumped almost everywhere. Van Gogh then added touches of colour with red and blue chalk, which was the first time he ever did so.<sup>8</sup> In *Two women in a balcony box* he accentuated the women's noses, mouths and ears with red, as well as hinting at the coloured ribbons in their hats. The different treatment of the passage behind them suggests that this is a combination of two separate studies.

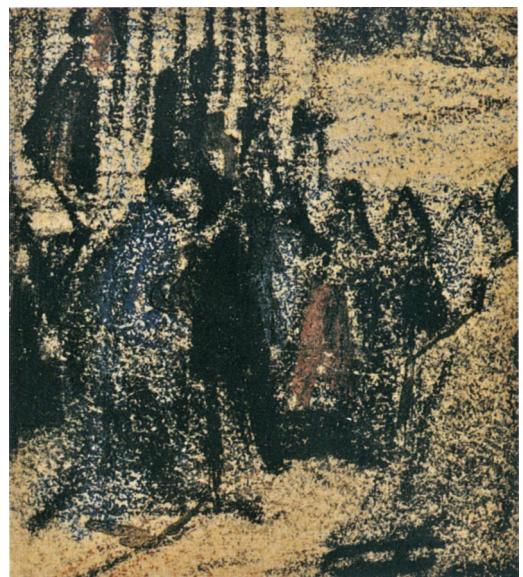
In addition to the black, red and blue chalk used in the *Dance-hall*, Van Gogh reinforced the lefthand part of the scene with the pen in black ink, which contained some gum, judging by the sheen (fig. 207d). In the balcony on the right there are some vertical scratches which were probably caused by jagged particles in the chalk, which scored the paper instead of transferring pigment. This is even more apparent in *Couple dancing*, where there are scratches in several of the figures. The initial draft of the wooden planks of the floor also appears to consist of bare grooves, but on closer examination it turns out that the lines still contain some graphite, so Van Gogh evidently used an extremely hard pencil in addition to the chalk. Above the figures in the background are a number of horizontal, indented lines which have nothing to do with the scene and are probably due to forceful drawing on another sheet. Some of the figures were drawn directly in blue, without an initial draft in black.

There are various indications that these are utilitarian drawings intended solely for the artist's own use. In addition to the evidence of the torn and cut edges, there are fingerprints at the bottom of cats. 207 and 208, and ink spots on the back of cat. 207. A pinhole in the middle of the top edge of *Two women in a balcony box* indicates that Van Gogh pinned the

sheet up after removing it from the sketchbook. He was probably interested less in the two women than in the sketch of Het Steen on the back of the sheet, to which he referred when making a painting of the castle (see cat. 213).



207c Reverse of cat. 208.



207d Detail of cat. 207.

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207 Dance-hall

DECEMBER 1885

Black, red and blue chalk, on wove paper

9.2 x 16.3 cm

Unsigned

Inv. d 26 V/1962

F 1350a JH 968

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation (ratified in 1982); 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

Tralbaut 1948, pp. 46, 244-48, 252, 253, 283, fig. xxviii; Tralbaut 1958, pp. 58, 59, fig. 11; Tralbaut 1969, p. 176; De la Faille 1970, pp. 471, 659; Amsterdam 1987, p. 427, no. 2.355; Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 128, 132; Otterlo 1990, p. 180; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 347, vol. 2, pl. ccxxx; Heenk 1995, p. 132; Hulsker 1996, pp. 213, 214.

EXHIBITIONS

1955 Antwerp, no. 128; 1960-61  
Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg & Toronto, no. 116; 1962 London, no. 25; 1990 Otterlo, no. 123.

208 Couple dancing

DECEMBER 1885

Black, red and blue chalk, pen in black ink, on wove paper

9.2 x 16.3 cm

Unsigned

Inv. d 27 V/1962

F 1350b JH 969

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation (ratified in

1982); 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

Tralbaut 1948, pp. 46, 244-46, 249-53, 283, fig. xxix; Tralbaut 1958, pp. 59, 60, fig. 1; Tralbaut 1969, p. 177; De la Faille 1970, pp. 471, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 427, no. 2.355; Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 128, 132; Otterlo 1990, p. 180; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 347, vol. 2, pl. ccxxx; Heenk 1995, p. 132; Hulsker 1996, pp. 213, 214.

EXHIBITIONS

1955 Antwerp, no. 129; 1962  
London, no. 26; 1990 Otterlo, no. 124.

209 Two women in a balcony box

DECEMBER 1885

Black, red and blue chalk, on wove paper

9.2 x 16.6 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 213

Inv. d 25 V/1962

F 1350v JH 967

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 115, vol. 4, pl. cxxx; Tralbaut 1948, pp. 241-46, 253, 283, fig. xxvii; Cooper 1955, pp. 42-44; Tralbaut 1955 III, p. 21, fig. 3; Tralbaut 1958, pp. 57, 58, fig. xlvi; De la Faille 1970, pp. 470, 471, 659; Amsterdam 1987, p. 426,

no. 2.353; Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 128, 134; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 115, 347, vol. 2, pl. cxxx; Heenk 1995, p. 132; Hulsker 1996, pp. 213, 214.

EXHIBITIONS

1955 Antwerp, no. 127; 1963  
Humlebaek, no. 80; 1964  
Washington & New York, no. 80.

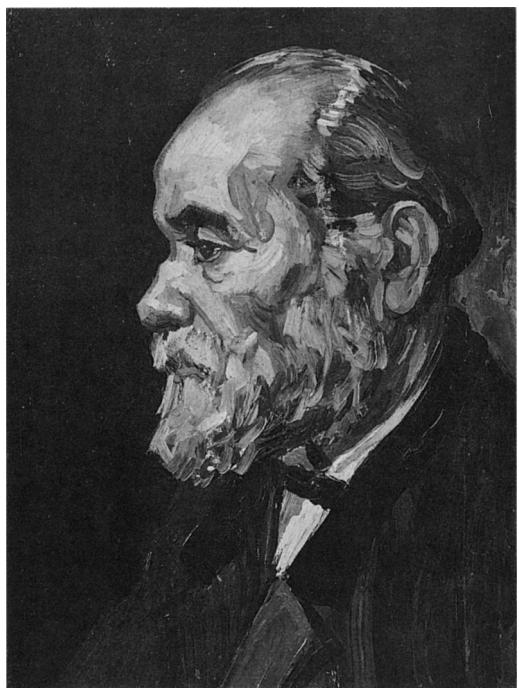
## 210, 211 Studies of heads

Van Gogh was kept busy during his first week in Antwerp – exploring the city, preparing his new lodgings and studio, and visiting museums and art dealers. When his drawing and painting materials arrived from Nuenen he began looking for models. ‘I have been busy going backward and forward, and also tracing those people [the art dealers], and model-hunting too. The latter is always tremendously difficult, but I have found them elsewhere so I shall find them here too. Tomorrow I have an appointment with a splendid old man – will he come?’ [549/438]. He did, as we learn from the next letter, of 9 December 1885. ‘I must write to you again to tell you that I have succeeded in finding a model. I have made two fairly large heads, by way of trial for a portrait. First, that old man whom I wrote to you about, a kind of head like V. Hugo’s’ [550/439].

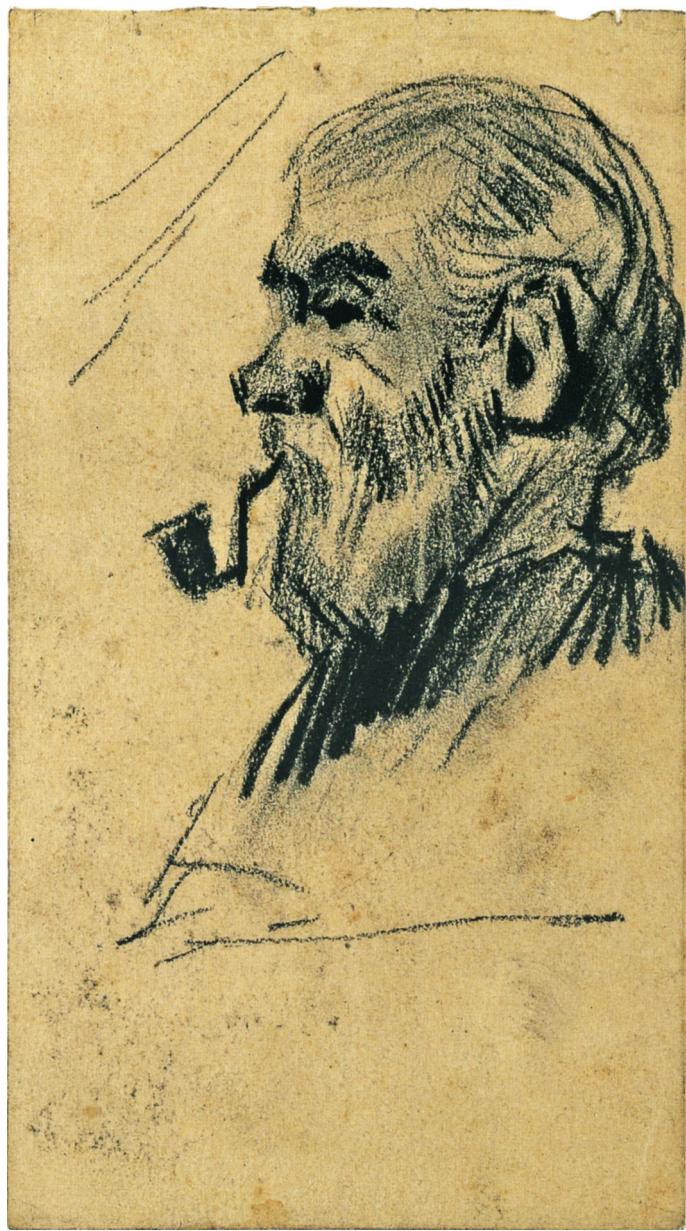
The Antwerp œuvre comprises both a drawn and painted head of an old man (cat. 210 and fig. 210a). Although they are not absolutely identical (the hairstyle, nose and angle of view are slightly different), there are enough points of similarity to conclude that they are of the same model. The moustache, beard and hair are the same length, and the light and shaded passages in the drawn study correspond precisely to those in the painting.

It is not entirely clear what Van Gogh meant by ‘a kind of head like V. Hugo’s’. He may have been referring to the likeness, for the old man does bear a passing resemblance to the French poet: advanced age, grey hair, a receding hairline and a beard (fig. 210b). It is possible, though, that he was alluding to the sitter’s character, for capturing a person’s character was a preoccupation of his at this time. ‘The question is whether one starts from the soul or from the clothes, and whether the form serves as a coat-stand for ribbons and bows or if one considers the form as the means of rendering an impression, a sentiment, or if one models for the sake of modelling, because it is so infinitely beautiful in itself. Only the first is transitory, the latter two are both high art’ [553/442].<sup>1</sup> Van Gogh had already described Victor Hugo’s character in a letter of 1882: ‘[...] but I still prefer the Victor Hugo as described by Victor Hugo himself, nothing but: “Et moi je me taisais. Tel que l’on voit se taire un coq sur la bruyère” [And I kept silent, just as one sees a cock keeping silent on a heather bush]’ [290/248]. That quiet,

<sup>1</sup> This may be an allusion to Carlyle’s *Sartor resartus*, which Van Gogh had read in 1883; see letter 327/R30.



210a *Head of an old man* (F 205  
JH 971), 1885. Amsterdam, Van Gogh  
Museum.



210 Head of an old man



211 Head of a man

2 See letters 551/440 and 552/441.

3 One argument against this is the indentation left by a sewing thread, which would indicate a position in the middle of the book.

4 There is no known painted version of Head of a man.

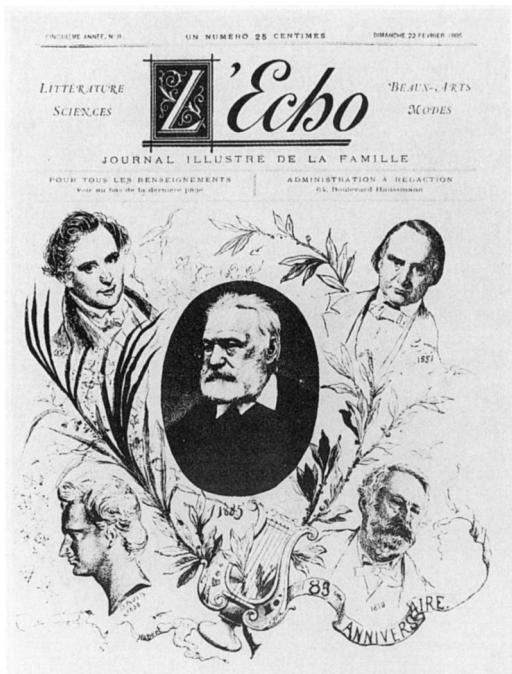
observant nature is immediately apparent in the drawn and painted portraits of the old man in Antwerp.

Van Gogh had lofty ideas about portraiture, but there was also a commercial side to his interest. He believed that there was a market for portraits as well as for city views, which meant that they might earn him some money.<sup>2</sup> As with the figure studies he had made back in the Netherlands, he was more interested in working-class types like the old man and the man in the apron (cat. 211), than in the middle classes. 'I see the people in the street, all very well, but I often think the servant-girls are so much more interesting and beautiful than the ladies, the workmen more interesting than the gentlemen. And in those common girls and fellows I find a power and vitality which, if they are to be expressed in their especial character, ought to be painted with a firm brushstroke, with a simple technique' [550/439].

These two heads are also simple and direct. They were drawn with the same kind of soft black chalk, which is stumped in the shaded parts of the faces to impart a subtle modelling. As a result, the undrawn areas automatically serve as highlights. Van Gogh also employed stumping in the *Head of a man* (cat. 211) to make the hair and the areas above the shoulders even darker. The man is wearing an apron, the converging lines at the bottom suggesting that it is bulging. Beneath it he has a coat with a flap which is fastened with a button. His round face is given a slightly dull-witted look by his squint and the drooping eyelids. Van Gogh used rather broad strokes in the *Head of an old man* (cat. 210) to indicate the clothing, pipe and edge of the ear.

The two drawings come from the same sketchbook as those of a dance-hall (*cats. 207-209*) and two views of Antwerp (*cats. 212, 213*). They were bound in at the top, where they were damaged when being removed from the book. The sheet with the *Head of a man* was probably torn out before the drawing was made, for there is chalk in the stitching holes and on the layer of glue still attached to the top edge. That glue might indicate that the page was at the very front or back of the sketchbook.<sup>3</sup> Nothing more can be said about the position in the book of the *Head of an old man* (cat. 210) beyond the fact that traces of black chalk on the back of the sheet show that there was at least one page following it.

The pinholes at the top of each sketch tell us that they were pinned up somewhere after they had been completed. In the case of the old man, this may have been done when Van Gogh was working on the painted portrait.<sup>4</sup> The drawing was almost certainly not a preliminary study for the painting. The differences are too great for that, and both versions were taken directly from the model, but one can well imagine that Van Gogh wanted to have the



210b Photograph of Victor Hugo.

From: *L'Echo*, 22 February 1885.

drawing close at hand while working on the painting. He may have used it as a guide for the underdrawing.<sup>5</sup>

It emerges from a letter which Van Gogh wrote to Theo at the end of his stay in Antwerp that he had kept in touch with the old man, who came from France. 'All the time I have been here I have had a comrade, an old Frenchman, and I have painted his portrait, which Verlat approved of, and which you will see' [568/457].<sup>6</sup> Van Gogh goes on to tell of his concern for the old man, who, like himself, was not in the best of health.<sup>7</sup> 'The winter was even worse for him than for me, and the poor devil is much worse off than I am because at his age it is very critical. Today I went with him to the same doctor I had been to myself, and he will probably have to go into hospital and undergo an operation, which will be decided tomorrow. At last I had persuaded him to do it, but he was so nervous about it that it took a long time to persuade him to go and hear his sentence. He knew that it was going to be quite serious, and dared not entrust himself to the hospital doctor. I wonder what will be decided. It is possible that I shall stay here a few days longer in March for his sake.'

*5 Below the paint layer is an underdrawing in black chalk, which can actually be seen with the naked eye in the area around the mouth. It is a precise drawing of the facial features and was meticulously followed while painting. The paint in the rest of the picture is too thick for an underdrawing to be detected with infrared reflectography.*

*6 Verlat was the director of the Antwerp academy to whom Van Gogh showed several of his works in order to gain admission; see letters 554/443, 555/444 and 556/445.*

*7 Van Gogh's problems with his health are a recurring theme in the Antwerp letters.*

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210 Head of an old man

FIRST HALF OF DECEMBER 1885

Black chalk on wove paper

16.5 x 9.2 cm

Unsigned

Inv. d 41 V/1971

F 1359 JH 984

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-71

V.W. van Gogh; 1971 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1971-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,

Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 117, vol. 4, pl. CXXXII; Tralbaut 1948, pp. 258, 284, fig. XXXIII; Tralbaut 1958, p. 63, fig. IV; De la Faille 1970, pp. 474, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 428, no. 2364; Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 128, 130; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 117, 349, 350, vol. 2, pl. CXXXII; Heenk 1995, pp. 100, 133, 134; Hulsker 1996, pp. 214, 215, 218.

EXHIBITIONS

1955 Antwerp, no. 140; 1980

Mons, no. 29.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 117, vol. 4, pl. CXXXII; Tralbaut 1948, pp. 257, 258, 283, fig. XXXII; Tralbaut 1958, p. 63, fig. IV; De la Faille 1970, pp. 474, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 428, no. 2365; Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 128, 129, 278; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 117, 349, 350, vol. 2, pl. CXXXII; Heenk 1995, pp. 100, 133, 134; Hulsker 1996, pp. 215, 216, 218.

EXHIBITION

1955 Antwerp, no. 130.

211 Head of a man

DECEMBER 1885

Black chalk on wove paper

16.5 x 9.2 cm

Unsigned

Inv. d 40 V/1971

F 1358 JH 980

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-71

V.W. van Gogh; 1971 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1971-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,

Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

## 212-216 Views of Antwerp

Cityscapes were part of Van Gogh's standard repertoire. Back in The Hague, a commission for a series of local views had provided him with his first, if modest, commercial success, and sent him scouring the city for suitable subjects.<sup>1</sup> On a visit to Amsterdam in October 1885 he had painted two small cityscapes,<sup>2</sup> and he returned to the genre quite regularly in Paris, and later, although less frequently, in Arles.

Van Gogh moved to Antwerp in order to study from the live model. Shortly before leaving Nuenen he calculated that he could afford to pay for models if he produced saleable works in other genres, such as city views.<sup>3</sup> His first impressions of Antwerp convinced him that he would find attractive subjects there. In his second letter to Theo after his arrival, written on 28 November 1885, he gave lively accounts of the city and said that it would provide him with subjects. He also mentioned that he had been drawing in a park.<sup>4</sup> Ten days later he spoke of his plans for a painting with a view of the Scheldt seen from the far side of the river, with the old city in the background.<sup>5</sup>

In the middle of December he tried to sell a painting of the 9th-century castle Het Steen to a dealer.<sup>6</sup> When he wrote to Theo about a second failed attempt, he briefly voiced his suspicion that there was a gap in the market. 'I showed my view of "Het Steen" to another dealer, who liked its tone and colour but was too engrossed in making up his inventory, and besides he has little room, but he did ask me to come back after the New Year. It is just the thing for foreigners who want to have a souvenir of Antwerp, so I shall make even more city views of that kind. Yesterday, for instance, I made a few study drawings for a work with a view of the cathedral. I also made a little one of the Park' [552/441].

These activities came to an end in mid-January, when the weather and his poor health drove him back indoors.<sup>7</sup> He enrolled at the academy on 18 January 1886, and spent most of his time there from then on.

The 'little one of the Park' has vanished without trace. There is, however, another small view of a corner of Antwerp, one of seven scenes from a dismantled sketchbook (*cat. 212, see also cats. 207-209*). The reason for placing this scene in Antwerp is based mainly on the fact that it belongs to the group, for the actual location is unidentifiable. It is certainly not the one

<sup>1</sup> See *Drawings 1, cats. 24-26*.

<sup>2</sup> See *Paintings 1, cat. 41*.

<sup>3</sup> See letter 545/434.

<sup>4</sup> See letter 548/437.

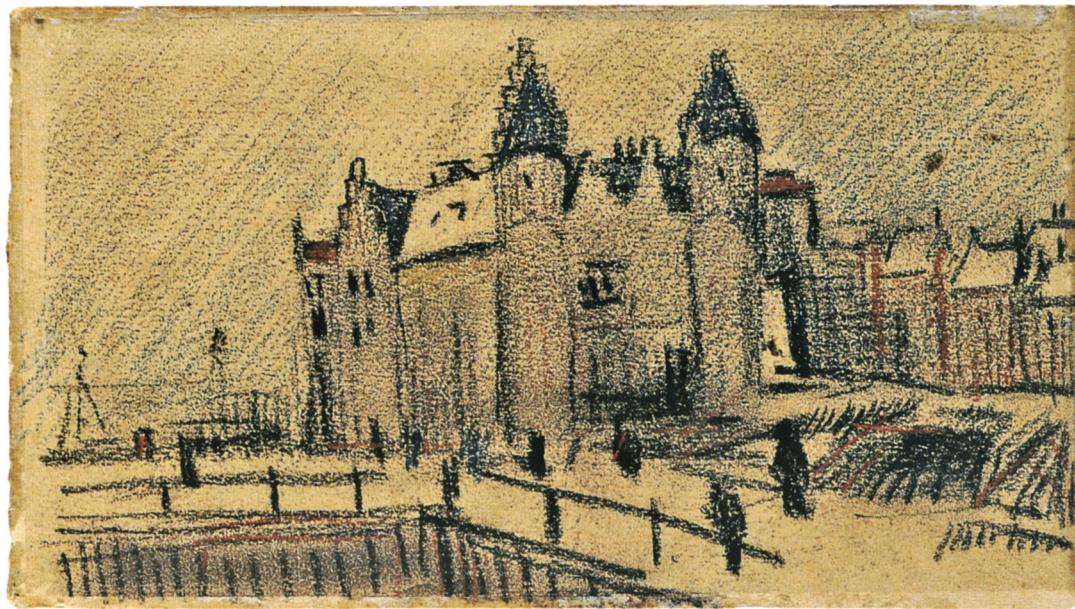
<sup>5</sup> See letter 550/439.

<sup>6</sup> See letter 551/440.

<sup>7</sup> See letter 555/444.



212 City view



213 View of Het Steen



214 View of Het Steen

8 See Guido Portael, *De Antwerpse burcht 'Het Steen'*, Deurne 1994, *passim*.

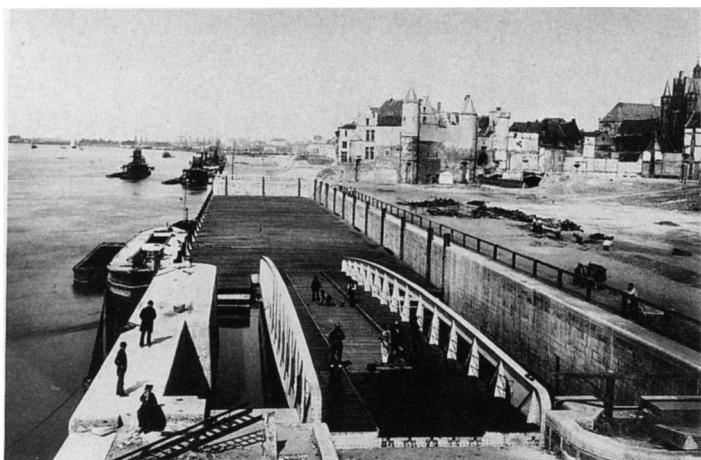
9 *Gids 1885*, p. 37: [...] 't zou uit een oogpunt van architectonische kunst wezenlijk te betreuren zijn, wanneer de nieuwe inrichting der kaaien de slechting van 't Steen mocht eischen'.

10 See letter 551/440.

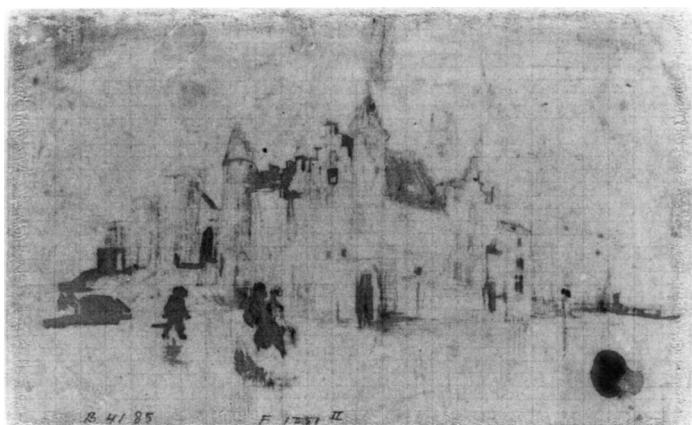
Van Gogh was referring to. Although there is something in the middle of this small, rough sketch which might be a park, the scene is dominated by the figures and houses on the left and by the street in the foreground. The rather undistinguished buildings provide few if any clues for a precise identification of the spot. The slightly depressing mood of the twilit scene makes it unlikely that it was a study for a city view that would have appealed to tourists. Due to the lack of information to be gleaned from the drawing itself, it cannot be dated any more precisely than between December 1885 and the first half of January 1886.

The painting of Het Steen Castle which Van Gogh tried to place with Antwerp art dealers has also disappeared, but there are two surviving drawings of that monumental and picturesque building. Het Steen, which stands on the banks of the Scheldt, was a small citadel which was completed in 1843. It had a chequered history, being the residence of the Margraves of Antwerp for several centuries before becoming a prison in the 14th century, which it remained until 1823. It was then occupied by a sawmill and a fish market until 1845, when it was used to house impoverished families. From 1862 to 1952 it was a museum of antiquities, and today it is the home of Belgium's National Maritime Museum.<sup>8</sup>

A few years before Van Gogh arrived in Antwerp, however, Het Steen's future was beginning to look uncertain. In 1879, work began on realigning the Antwerp dockside in a major operation that was to last until 1887, and for a while it seemed that Het Steen was doomed. The writer of a travel guide



212<sup>a</sup> Photograph of the dockside with Het Steen after the docks had been realigned. From: *Nouvelles installations maritimes d'Anvers, 1877-1884*, n.p. n.d., album 61, pl. 37. Antwerp, Stadsarchief.



212<sup>b</sup> Reverse of cat. 214.

lamented as late as 1885: 'It would be truly regrettable from the viewpoint of architectonic art if the restructuring of the dockside were to require the razing of Het Steen'.<sup>9</sup> As it turned out, the demolition plans were defeated by a slender majority in the Antwerp city council.

When Van Gogh drew *Het Steen* at the end of 1885 the rebuilding work along the dockside was still in full swing. Both versions of *View of Het Steen* give a glimpse of this construction work. On the right is a large pile of rubble, which is a little more indistinct in the chalk sketch (cat. 213) than in the more detailed pen drawing (cat. 214). It probably consists of the uncleared remnants of the Palingbrug, Steenstraat and Gevangenisstraat, which had been demolished in the previous two years, unintentionally allowing the medieval castle to come into its own again. Work on this stretch of the docks was still incomplete when Van Gogh made his drawings. A slightly later photograph taken from further off but from almost the same angle, higher up and slightly to the left, shows the situation after the realignment had been completed (fig. 212a).

The chalk sketch is from the same sketchbook as the rather gloomy study for a city view (cat. 212), the two studies of heads (cats. 210, 211) and the dance-hall sketches (cats. 207-209), one of which (cat. 209) is on the back of this view of Het Steen. Traces of the stitching holes can be seen along the left edge. As with the dance-hall sketches, Van Gogh first laid down the scene with black chalk before adding accents with coloured chalk: blue on the roofs of Het Steen, in two small figures and in the sky, yellowish green on the castle walls, and red throughout the scene. There are seven people strolling along the quayside, and beyond the railing on the left are masts and a sail.

The pen drawing is also touched up with coloured chalk: blue throughout, and some red here and there. At lower left Van Gogh also added some black lines with a very hard chalk, and gave the castle a grey tone with pencil. Het Steen is shown in some detail, and compared to the sketch a great deal of care has been taken over other elements in the scene, such as the figures, the boats on the Scheldt and the lamppost on the left. This makes it all the more strange that Van Gogh omitted the houses on the right in the chalk sketch, which the photograph shows did indeed stand there. He probably made both drawings as studies for the painting he had in mind. The small sketch served as a general guide, while the more detailed drawing was necessary for a convincing depiction of the castle, which was his main subject. Both drawings have pinholes at the top, and were probably pinned to Van Gogh's easel while he worked on the picture. There is a small oily stain at upper right on the chalk sketch, which may have been made by the painting materials. Since Van Gogh approached several dealers with the painting in mid-December 1885,<sup>10</sup> the time the canvas took to dry means that he must have made his preparatory

Wanneer dan ik het niet te lang gewacht om a de gezondheid  
vertrouwings van een brief uit het vorige te lezen te horen.  
Want een brief bedrijft dat er nog best is geluk en  
zij houdt de lezer nog in hoop dat ze nog beschikbaar  
op algemene leden en op zijn geplaatst die te overtuigen  
zijn en die, en wie dan dat ik gelooven kan zij  
de steden zullen bij brengen.  
En daarmee juist geloof ik dat en gegeven  
het kwaad dat kunnen wanneer wij over een  
typ elkaars enige te Parry geven.  
Ik heb het geweet dat ik gehad. Dige week omdat  
bekende te schieden dat ik nu ook in de leden  
en dat ik daarna van hulp is tot hulp is nog maar  
I moet zo werken op een club. Want ik ben van hoor  
die die in de missie Indiërs beleden Hollander.  
Dan deze week schilderde ik een groot ding met  
twee moedige torens - twee voorstellingen van  
een Vanda - En dat houdt mij niet meer.  
En zo volt het indien nu het geschiedt - ik heb nu hoor  
grootte figuur kleiner - en in alle geval heeft het leeuw  
dingen van - voorstel dat het nu een interieur niet na  
van een lange gestalte mocht te hebben gezien dat nu  
en dat er niet te zijn en dat er niet meer.  
Vanda - juist om een Parry en een beeld te maken  
moet men ergens anders zijn gevoeld en heeft men aldaar  
Is dan niet dan die <sup>dag</sup> een indien heden geweest lange af  
kijken  
Wat verder mij zegd is heel streng en dat ook niet  
Vandaar dat indien ik nu zeg dat en dat reden mij  
ik ook een jaar niet meer voor te lezen  
des nuets ~~of~~ niet anders dan indien nu heden maar heden en  
niet nu want dat geluk de koste mij voorzag  
dat ik dan heel anders vol te horen kom en nu nog  
ander werk houden of om niet te  
En ik geloof dat dat waar is - want dus een eigen  
te horen want ik in ander en ander model ander en  
gekeerd dat voor den eersten dag.  
De bestie van de klas & heeft dat ook ons gegeven  
en hij zegd dat hij niet ideaal storie niet wel volledig  
Voorlopers een en dat dat zelf kunnen zijn en dingen van vader  
de dingen van van hem -

212c Letter to Theo of c. 28 January  
1886 [558/447]. Amsterdam, Van Gogh  
Museum.



215 The Grote Markt



216 The spire of the Church of Our Lady

<sup>11</sup> Heenk 1995, p. 133.

<sup>12</sup> For the cathedral see J. van Brabant, *Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekathedraal van Antwerpen: grootste gotische kerk der Nederlanden: een keur van prenten en foto's*, Antwerp 1972.

<sup>13</sup> See the Introduction.

<sup>14</sup> De Vlaert is also called *De Keyser*. *De Gulden Balans* used to be the Clothmakers' Hall. *Rodenborg House* was formerly the guildhall of the tanners, and then of the carpenters.

<sup>15</sup> On this see Arthur Hendrik Cornette, *Iconographie van Antwerpen: 174 oude stadszichten en plattegronden historisch toegelicht*, Antwerp 1933, no. cxxvi, and George van Cauwenbergh, *Gids voor oud Antwerpen*, 4th ed., Antwerp 1975, pp. 18-19.

<sup>16</sup> Van Gogh probably went to the *Grote Markt* regularly, albeit after dark. He had joined two drawing clubs, where he could work from 9.30 to 11.30 at night [558/447], which may have been housed in buildings on the square. See Tralbaut 1948, pp. 170-72.

sketches in the first week of December, very soon after he arrived in Antwerp.

The pen drawing is on a half sheet of the smooth, squared paper on which Van Gogh wrote his letters from Antwerp and elsewhere, and does not come from a sketchbook or notebook, as has been suggested (cf. figs. 212b, c).<sup>11</sup> That is quite exceptional for such a detailed sketch, for Van Gogh preferred to draw on a better grade of paper. It is not likely that a shortage of money forced him to use cheap materials so soon after coming to Antwerp, and although the paper is identical to that used for his letters, the drawing was never sent to Theo. The letters were all folded once to fit them in the envelope, but the drawing is uncreased. Moreover, there is nothing in the letters or annotations on the drawing itself to indicate that he sent anything of this kind, as there certainly would have been in the case of such a detailed drawing. One possible explanation is that Van Gogh initially considered using the squared grid to help him transfer the scene and its rather complex perspective to the canvas, on which he would have sketched in a similar but larger grid. It is doubtful, though, that he did use it in this way, for he would have had to make some lines heavier, and possibly have numbered them as well (cf. Appendix 1). The squaring on the front of the sheet, which was originally a greyish blue, has faded badly, but is still clearly visible on the back (fig. 212b).

Van Gogh's words, 'Yesterday, for instance, I made a few study drawings for a work with a view of the cathedral' [552/441], show that he also planned to paint a view of the city that included the cathedral. It was an obvious choice, for the Church of Our Lady, the largest Gothic church in the Low Countries, is a masterpiece of Antwerp architecture. Building started around 1352 and the tower was topped out in 1521, but it was to be exactly another hundred years before the immense structure was completed. The cathedral was extensively renovated between 1844 and 1917.<sup>12</sup> Van Gogh visited it in order to study Rubens's *Raising of the Cross* and *Deposition* in detail.<sup>13</sup>

There are two drawings which can be identified as the studies mentioned by Van Gogh. He says that he made them the day before sending the letter, so they must date from around 19 December 1885. The 'work with a view of the cathedral' which he was planning was of the *Grote Markt* with the cathedral tower rising up in the background. This sketch on blue laid paper gives an idea of his intentions (cat. 215). A more detailed study of the spire in black chalk on pale pink laid paper (cat. 216) was undoubtedly made to enable him to depict the details in the planned painting – which was either never executed or is lost, for the tower in the surviving *Grote Markt* is very sketchy and incomplete.

Van Gogh drew the *Grote Markt* with the Town Hall on his right. The narrow street straight ahead is *Maalderijstraat*. The block of houses to the left

of it extends much further onto the square than the one on the other side, as can be seen from an old panoramic photograph which was probably taken from the Town Hall (fig. 212d). Van Gogh must have stood not far from the second lamppost up from bottom left in the photograph. The group of grand old mansions to the left of Maalderijstraat were, from right to left, Guldenberch (the house over which the tower looms), De Volaert, De Gulden Balans and Rodenborg House.<sup>14</sup> A more recent photograph shows these buildings, the first two now restored, from almost the same angle as Van Gogh's drawing (fig. 212e). Their original façades were stripped off in 1875 and replaced by the rather bland exteriors seen in Van Gogh's drawing and the earlier photograph (fig. 212d).<sup>15</sup> They were restored to their former glory in the 1950s.<sup>16</sup>

The reflections of the houses on the square show that Van Gogh drew the scene on a rainy day. One delightful touch is the reflection of the wet surface of the square on the red jacket of the man on the right. Once again, the scene was laid down with black chalk. Some fuzzy lines above the houses on the left show how Van Gogh made his first tentative approach to the scene. He added touches of colour to the completed black chalk sketch: red chalk in the houses and the man's jacket, and blue in the tower. There is also some heightening with opaque white watercolour. The blue paper has yellowed a little, as can be seen from the edges, which were protected from the light by a mount and are now a darker blue than the rest of the paper.



212d Photograph of the Grote Markt and the cathedral seen from the Town Hall, after 1875. Antwerp, City Archives.



212e Photograph of houses on the Grote Markt, with the cathedral beyond, c. 1970. Antwerp, City Archives.

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<sup>17</sup> Drawings 1, cats. 177, 178. Liesbeth Heenk had already pointed out that these two sheets come from the same book; see Heenk 1995, pp. 127, 128 and 133. She also believes that a study in the Museum Kröller-Müller did as well (F 1253 JH 898), but this was rejected in Drawings 2, cat. 177, note 3.

The sheet comes from a sketchbook, for there are some old glue residues and stitching holes on the right.

The pale pink paper of *The spire of the Church of Our Lady* was originally brighter and closer to the colour of the edges, which were also once hidden by a mount. The original shade may have tended a little towards lilac, for microscopic examination reveals red and, to a lesser degree, blue fibres.

This study has glue residues and barely visible stitching holes with the same intervals between them as the sketch of the Grote Markt. Both sheets have almost identical dimensions, the short sides being practically the same length and the long sides differing by only a few millimetres, which is what one would expect of sheets torn out of a sketchbook along the short sides. These similarities and the closely related subjects seem to indicate that the sheets are from a sketchbook containing laid paper in various colours, or from different sketchbooks put together by the same binder on the same binding machine. The sheets do have different watermarks (ED & C<sup>ie</sup> in the blue sheet, AL in a scroll in the pink one), but the factor they have in common is that a full, uncut sheet also has the countermark PL BAS. This means that the paper was made in the same mill, or at the very least in two very closely related ones from which the binder bought his supplies. Two sheets of coloured paper from the Nuenen period (cats. 177, 178) with stitching holes in the same positions as in these two sheets, may come from the same sketchbook or from different books from the same manufacturer.<sup>17</sup>

212 City view

DECEMBER 1885-FIRST HALF OF  
JANUARY 1886

Black chalk on wove paper  
9.2 x 16.6 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 42 V/1971  
F 1355 JH 966

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-71  
V.W. van Gogh; 1971 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1971-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 116,  
vol. 4, pl. cxxx; Tralbaut 1948,  
pp. 234-36, 253, 283, fig. xxiii;  
Tralbaut 1955 1; Tralbaut 1958,  
pp. 54-57, fig. xi; Tralbaut 1969,  
p. 168; De la Faille 1970, pp. 470,  
659; Amsterdam 1987, p. 427,  
no. 2.356; Van der Wolk 1987,  
pp. 128, 133, 291; Otterlo 1990,  
pp. 31, 177; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, pp. 115, 346, 347, vol. 2,  
pl. cxxx; Heenk 1995, pp. 132,  
133; Hulsker 1996, pp. 214-16.

EXHIBITION

1980 Mons, no. 28.

213 View of Het Steen

EARLY DECEMBER 1885  
Black, red, blue and yellow-green  
chalk, on wove paper  
9.2 x 16.6 cm

Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 209

Inv. d 25 V/1962  
F 1350r JH 976

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam.

Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 115,  
vol. 4, pl. cxxx; Tralbaut 1948,  
pp. 234-36, 253, 283, fig. xxiii;  
Tralbaut 1955 1; Tralbaut 1958,  
pp. 54-57, fig. xi; Tralbaut 1969,  
p. 168; De la Faille 1970, pp. 470,  
659; Amsterdam 1987, p. 427,  
no. 2.356; Van der Wolk 1987,  
pp. 128, 133, 291; Otterlo 1990,  
pp. 31, 177; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, pp. 115, 346, 347, vol. 2,  
pl. cxxx; Heenk 1995, pp. 132,  
133; Hulsker 1996, pp. 214-16.

EXHIBITIONS

1946-47 Liège, Brussels & Mons,  
no. 37; 1947 Paris, no. 37; 1947  
Geneva, no. 38; 1955 Antwerp,  
no. 134; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 66;  
1990 Otterlo, no. 122.

214 View of Het Steen

EARLY DECEMBER 1885

Pen in brown ink, black, red and  
blue chalk, pencil, on squared  
paper  
13.1 x 21.1 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 57 V/1962  
F 1351 JH 977

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 116,  
vol. 4, pl. cxxx; Tralbaut 1948,  
pp. 236-38, 253, 284, fig. xxiv;  
Cooper 1955, p. 46; Tralbaut  
1955 1; Tralbaut 1958, pp. 55-57,

fig. xli; Tralbaut 1969, p. 169;  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 471, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 146, 147,  
427, no. 2.357; Van der Wolk  
1987, p. 291; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, pp. 116, 347, vol. 2,  
pl. cxxx; Heenk 1995, pp. 128,  
133; Hulsker 1996, pp. 214-16.

EXHIBITIONS

1905 Amsterdam 11, no. 465  
[Dfl. 50]; 1946-47 Liège, Brussels  
& Mons, no. 36; 1947 Paris,  
no. 36; 1947 Geneva, no. 37; 1955  
Antwerp, no. 135; 1955 Amster-  
dam, no. 67; 1957 Nijmegen,  
no. 38; 1957-58 Stockholm,  
no. 44, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå,  
Östersund, Sandviken &  
Gothenburg, no cat. known;  
1960-61 Montreal, Ottawa,  
Winnipeg & Toronto, no. 115;  
1962 London, no. 22; 1963  
Humlebaek, no. 81; 1964  
Washington & New York, no. 81.

215 The Grote Markt

MID-DECEMBER 1885

Black, red and blue chalk, opaque  
white watercolour, on blue laid  
paper  
22.6 x 30.1 cm  
Watermark: remnants of ED &  
C<sup>e</sup> in a cartouche, truncated at  
the top edge  
Unsigned

Inv. d 206 V/1962  
F 1352 JH 975

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LETTER

552/441

#### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 116, vol. 4, pl. cxxxI; Tralbaut 1948, pp. 238, 239, 253, 284, fig. xxv; Tralbaut 1955 II; Tralbaut 1958, pp. 56, 57, fig. xlIV; De Gruyter 1961, p. 89; London 1968, pp. 53, 54, no. 55; Tralbaut 1969, p. 173; De la Faille 1970, pp. 471, 660; Amsterdam 1987, pp. 146, 147, 427, no. 2.358; Otterlo 1990, pp. 179, 180; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 116, 348, vol. 2, pl. cxxxI; Heenk 1994, p. 37; Heenk 1995, pp. 133, 149; Hulsker 1996, pp. 214, 216.

#### EXHIBITIONS

1945 Amsterdam, unnumbered; 1946 Stockholm, Gothenburg & Malmö, no. 19; 1946 Copenhagen, no. 19; 1946-47 Liège, Brussels & Mons, no. 35; 1947 Paris, no. 35; 1947 Geneva, no. 36; 1948 Amersfoort, no cat. known; 1948 Hilversum, no cat. known; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 225; 1949 Hengelo, no cat. known; 1949 Gouda, no cat. known; 1953 Zürich, no. 56; 1953 The Hague, no. 44; 1953 Otterlo & Amsterdam, no. 51; 1953-54 Saint Louis, Philadelphia & Toledo, no. 57; 1954-55 Bern, no. 118; 1955 Antwerp, no. 136; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 68; 1955-56 Liverpool, Manchester & Newcastle-upon-Tyne, no. 97; 1957-58 Leiden & Schiedam, no. 60; 1958 Mons, no. 61; 1961-62 Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo & Boston, no. 107; 1962-63 Pittsburgh, Detroit & Kansas City, no. 107; 1963 Humlebaek, no. 82; 1964 Washington & New York, no. 82; 1966 Paris & Albi, no. 28; 1967 Lille & Zürich, no. 30; 1967-68 Dallas, Philadelphia, Toledo & Ottawa, no. 27; 1968 Liège, no. 27; 1968-69 London, no. 55; 1971-72 Paris, no. 143; 1975 Malmö, no. 46; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 46; 1976-77 Tokyo, Kyoto & Nagoya,

no. 35; 1980 Mons, no. 20; 1982 Amsterdam, no catalogue; 1990 Otterlo, no. 126.

#### 216 The spire of the Church of Our Lady

MID-DECEMBER 1885  
Black chalk on pink laid paper  
29.9 x 22.6 cm  
Watermark: remnants of AL in a scroll, truncated at the right edge  
Unsigned

Inv. d 358 V/1962  
F 1356 JH 974

#### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925 J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62 V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

#### LETTER

552/44I

#### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 116, vol. 4, pl. cxxxIII; Tralbaut 1948, pp. 240, 241, 253, 284, fig. xxxVI; Tralbaut 1958, pp. 56, 57, fig. xlVII; De Gruyter 1961, p. 102; Tralbaut 1969, p. 173; De la Faille 1970, pp. 472, 473, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 427, no. 2.359; Otterlo 1990, pp. 179, 180; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 116, 349, vol. 2, pl. cxxxIII; Heenk 1995, p. 133; Hulsker 1996, pp. 214, 216.

#### EXHIBITIONS

1905 Amsterdam II, no. 466 [Dfl. 100]; 1945 Amsterdam, unnumbered; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 226; 1954-55 Bern, no. 119; 1955 Antwerp, no. 137; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 69; 1957 Breda, no. 36; 1957 Marseilles, no. 21; 1957-58 Stockholm, no. 45, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå,

Östersund, Sandviken & Gothen-

burg, no cat. known; 1958-59 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland & Seattle, no. 112; 1959-60 Utrecht, no. 75; 1960 Enschede, no. 28; 1961-62 Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo & Boston, no. 106; 1962-63 Pittsburgh, Detroit & Kansas City, no. 106; 1963 Humlebaek, no. 83; 1964 Washington & New York, no. 83; 1965 Charleroi & Ghent, no. 54; 1965-66 Stockholm & Gothenburg, no. 76, no cat. known, respectively; 1967 Wolfsburg, no. 97; 1980 Mons, no. 21; 1982 Amsterdam, no catalogue; 1986 Amsterdam, no catalogue; 1990 Otterlo, no. 125.

## 217 Portrait of a woman

Although Van Gogh said that he wanted to produce cityscapes because he thought he could find buyers for them, he actually concentrated more on work involving the human figure. 'I prefer painting people's eyes to cathedrals, for there is something in the eyes that is not in the cathedral, however solemn and imposing the latter may be. I find a human soul, be it that of a poor beggar or of a streetwalker, more interesting' [552/441]. He hoped that eventually, after making a large number of heads, he would earn money by getting a photographer to employ him to paint portraits.<sup>1</sup> Photographers had portraits in their studios which were painted over photographs – a practice which was unacceptable to an artist like Van Gogh. He felt that he could get better results by basing a painted portrait on both a photograph and on painted studies done directly from life.<sup>2</sup> It is not known whether he ever actually made any works of that kind.

This *Portrait of a woman* is of a 'streetwalker' with a rather withdrawn expression. She has dark eyes and black hair worn in two plaits.<sup>3</sup> Her dark coat has a wide collar and contrasts with the white scarf peeping out at the neck. Van Gogh captured the woman's appearance with bold, angular lines, and did not shy away from portraying the irregularities in her face, even perhaps accentuating them. The eyes, for instance, have different shapes and are positioned asymmetrically, while the left side of the mouth appears much fuller than the right. The latter may be due to the change in the colour tracing the outlines of the lips.

To date the woman has been identified with two different women in Van Gogh's œuvre. Van Lindert sees similarities to Agostina Segatori, whose portrait Van Gogh painted in Paris.<sup>4</sup> She though, was 45 years old, and although it is difficult to gauge the age of this woman, she looks to be in her twenties or thirties, no older. V.W. van Gogh believed that she is also the woman in F 1357a JH 985, but the two have nothing in common apart from dark hair and a coat with a collar.<sup>5</sup>

The model has never before been associated with the one in the painting *Woman with a red bow in her hair* (fig. 217a). Van Gogh painted that woman twice at the end of December 1885, paying her for the sittings, and described her and the two portraits in a letter to Theo. 'As soon as I received the money I took a beautiful model and painted her head, lifesize. It is entirely light,

LATE DECEMBER 1885

Black and red-brown chalk, black lithographic crayon on wove paper  
50.7 x 39.3 cm  
Watermark: J WHATMAN 1884  
Unsigned

Inv. d 58 V/1962  
F 1357 JH 981

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 117,  
vol. 4, pl. cxxxii; Meier-Graefe  
1928, fig. 14; Tralbaut 1948,  
pp. 255-57, 268, 283, fig. xxxi;  
Tralbaut 1958, pp. 61, 62, fig. lii;  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 473, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 428, no. 2.363;  
Feilchenfeldt 1988, p. 130; Otterlo  
1990, pp. 179, 189; De la Faille  
1992, vol. 1, pp. 117, 349, vol. 2,  
pl. cxxxii; Heenk 1995, pp. 132,  
138, 156, 157, 270; Hulsker 1996,  
pp. 214-16, 218.

EXHIBITIONS  
1927-28 Berlin, no. 44; 1928  
Vienna & Hannover, no. 44; 1929  
Amsterdam, no. 40; 1928 Paris,  
no. 46; 1929-30 Rotterdam,  
no. 28; 1930-31 Arnhem,  
Groningen, Leeuwarden &  
Enschede, no cat. known, no. 24,  
no cat. known, respectively; 1955  
Antwerp, no. 126; 1955 Amsterdam,  
no. 65; 1957 Nijmegen,

no. 39; 1957-58 Stockholm,  
no. 43, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå,  
Östersund, Sandviken & Gothenburg,  
no cat. known; 1975  
Malmö, no. 48; 1976 Stockholm  
& Oslo, no. 48; 1976-77 Tokyo,  
Kyoto & Nagoya, no. 36; 1980  
Mons, no. 22; 1990 Otterlo,  
no. 136; 2000 Tokyo, no. 16.

<sup>1</sup> See the Introduction for Van Gogh's preoccupation with heads and portraits at this time.

<sup>2</sup> See letters 550/439 and 552/441 for Van Gogh's ideas on photography.

<sup>3</sup> Only one of the plaits is visible.

<sup>4</sup> F 370 JH 1208, F 381 JH 1355.

<sup>5</sup> Van Lindert in exhib.cat. Vincent van Gogh drawings exhibition. Van Gogh and his time from the Van Gogh Museum and the H.W. Mesdag Museum. Tokio (Seiji Togo Memorial Yasuda Kasai Museum of Art) 2000, p. 171.

<sup>6</sup> V.W. van Gogh in a letter to H. Wiegersma, 12 May 1952, Van Gogh Museum archives. It is not clear whether this small sketch is actually by Van Gogh. It has only been studied from a photograph.

<sup>7</sup> The first portrait is lost, but it can be deduced from the words 'I have begun a second study of the same model, in profile' [552/442], that it was a frontal view. It is possible that it bore a resemblance to this drawn Portrait of a woman.

<sup>8</sup> This does not mean that Van Gogh depicted the woman backlit. She is illuminated from the left with a fairly bright light, which casts dark shadows on her face.

<sup>9</sup> In Nuenen he once painted a similar background behind the head of a peasant, F 165 JH 688.

<sup>10</sup> This recurs in only two other drawings, both of them studies of plaster casts from the Paris period (see cats. 264, 267), which is why Heenk 1995, pp. 156, 157, assigns Portrait of a woman to Paris as well.

<sup>11</sup> The lithographic crayon is often mistaken for charcoal in the literature, following the lead given by De la Faille.

apart from the black hair. Yet the head itself stands out tonally against a background in which I tried to put a golden shimmer of light. [...] Jet-black hair – black which I had to make with carmine and Prussian blue, dullish white for the little jacket, light yellow, much lighter than the white, for the background. A scarlet note in the jet-black hair and another scarlet ribbon in the dullish white. She is a girl from a café chantant, yet the expression I sought was somewhat *Ecce Homo*-like. But I want to remain *true*, in the expression above all, though my own thoughts are in it too. This is what I wanted to express in it. When the model came to me she had apparently been very busy the last few nights, and she said something that was rather telling: "Pour moi le champagne ne m'égaie pas, il me rend tout triste" [As for me, champagne doesn't cheer me up, it makes me very sad]. That was the key, and I tried to express something voluptuous and at the same time deeply wounded. I have begun a second study of the same model, in profile' [552/442].<sup>6</sup>

In the portrait which Van Gogh described, which is now lost, he painted the head against a background of a 'golden shimmer of light', and he tried to achieve the same effect in this drawing, which may have borne some resemblance to the painting.<sup>7</sup> He drew lines in the right background at right angles to the head so as to form an aureole. The rest of the chalk lines follow the contour of the head, heightening the impression of a bundle of rays. *Portrait of a woman* is the earliest of Van Gogh's drawings with a background of this kind.<sup>8</sup> More of these aureoles are found in works he made in Paris, reaching their height in a *Self-portrait* from the winter of 1887-88 (fig. 217b).<sup>9</sup> Van Gogh may have added the aureole to the *Portrait of a woman* to underline the association with an *Ecce Homo*, which he based on the withdrawn and rather weary look in the eyes.

Van Gogh laid the portrait down with a fairly hard black chalk, placed dark accents in the hair, the collar and the eyes with lithographic crayon, and added touches of colour to the coat and the face with red-brown chalk.<sup>10</sup> He used a wet brush over the latter at various points in the face, such as the upper lip, and applied a similar wash in the coat. Red-brown chalk is found nowhere else in his work from Antwerp or Paris.<sup>11</sup>

As he had done in his Hague drawings, Van Gogh scraped the lithographic crayon off here and there with a sharp implement. The main purpose of this in the early work was to create light passages, but here the function of the scratched lines – in the collar on the right, in the right eyebrow and on the crown of the head – is not entirely clear, for the highlights in this sheet are suggested by reserves. The greasiness of the crayon makes it glister a little. The paper is slightly rippled, and there the sheen is more pronounced as a result of the material coming into contact with other sheets



217 Portrait of a woman

<sup>11</sup> The combination of black and red chalk is, however, found in a few works from The Hague. See *Drawings 1*, cat. 52, fig. 52a, and note 2. Here, however, the red is far more pronounced.

<sup>12</sup> See cats. 219-222, 249 and 257.

<sup>13</sup> The dimensions range from 50.4 x 39.2 cm to 50.9 x 39.5 cm.

which rubbed against it. The undulation also produced an area of wear in the left of the collar. The grease from the crayon penetrated the paper, staining the back.

*Portrait of a woman* is an unusual drawing for several reasons. It is the only detailed portrait to have survived from the Antwerp period, the red-brown chalk was not used in any other drawings done in Antwerp or Paris, and this is the first time that Van Gogh added an aureole in the background. The drawing is on a full sheet of fairly coarse watercolour paper with the watermark J WHATMAN 1884, which is clearly visible in the woman's coat on the left. The paper is a creamy colour, and as such differs from the other Whatman sheets from the Antwerp and Paris periods, all of which have a cool grey tone.<sup>12</sup> The coarseness and thickness of the paper (0.22 mm) also set it apart from the others, which range in thickness from 0.15 to 0.19 mm. Both types of paper, however, are roughly the same size.<sup>13</sup> Van Gogh had never used J WHATMAN 1884 paper before.



<sup>217a</sup> *Woman with a red bow in her hair* (F 207 JH 979), 1885. Private collection.



<sup>217b</sup> *Self-portrait* (F 344 JH 1353), 1887-88. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

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Of Van Gogh's 35 surviving drawings of plaster casts made from sculptures, it is very likely that the only one made at the academy in Antwerp was this *Discus thrower*, which is after a copy of the statue by the classical Greek sculptor Myron (5th century BC).<sup>1</sup> The expressive and robust style of drawing is typical of Van Gogh's early work in Antwerp, and is still close to the way in which he depicted the peasants working the land in Nuenen.<sup>2</sup> He actually made that connection himself at the end of his stay in Antwerp when he reassessed his first studies of plaster casts. 'Like the torso of a woman that I finished today; it is more distinguished in the modelling and less brusque than the first ones, in which the figures involuntarily remind one of peasants or woodcutters' [567/456].

The paper of *The discus thrower* also supports a dating in Antwerp, being the same cream-coloured wove with the watermark TS & Z which Van Gogh had used in Nuenen in the summer of 1885 for a dozen drawings of peasants at work. This paper was used only for those Nuenen studies and this one, the subject of which rules out the Brabant village as the place of origin. Before leaving Nuenen Van Gogh wrote to Theo saying that in addition to paints and stretchers he was taking paper and drawing materials to Antwerp, 'so that whatever happens, I shall always have something to do' [545/434]. This sheet was probably part of that baggage, and was carried rolled up, for the paper has the distinctive horizontal and diagonal creases that are caused by flattening a rolled piece of paper. The lines of the chalk drawing are not distorted by those surface irregularities, so they must already have been in the paper before Van Gogh started drawing the study.

*The discus thrower* was executed with two kinds of black chalk, a soft one and another that was slightly harder and had a brown tinge.<sup>3</sup> Part of the back of the figure is washed, and passages in the support were made lighter by erasing the chalk (fig. 218a) – techniques which Van Gogh had employed back in Nuenen. To the left of the figure is a vertical strip of worn patches, the cause of which can no longer be established. The sheet has its original edges on three sides, with the top being trimmed a few millimetres. There were probably pinholes in all four corners. The two at the top, anyway, are still visible, but the pin at bottom left caused a tear, and a piece of paper measuring 2.3 x 8.0 cm has been removed at bottom right.

FIRST HALF OF FEBRUARY  
1886

Black chalk, black chalk with a brown tinge, on wove paper  
56.2 x 44.3 cm  
Watermark: TS & Z  
Unsigned

Inv. d 398 V/1962  
F 1364e JH 1080

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan  
to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;  
1973 on permanent loan to  
the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 480, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 437,  
no. 2.419; Van der Wolk 1987,  
pp. 269, 270; Otterlo 1990,  
p. 191; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1,  
p. 354, vol. 2, pl. ccxxxiii; Heenk  
1995, pp. 135, 136, 270; Hulsker  
1996, p. 234.

EXHIBITIONS  
1954-55 Bern, no. 120 (as F 1364);  
1972 Nijmegen, no. 9; 1990  
Otterlo, no. 138.

<sup>1</sup> The sheet was first assigned to the Antwerp period by J. van der Wolk in Otterlo 1990, p. 179. Heenk 1995, p. 136, followed suit. Hulsker 1996, p. 234, places it in Paris in the spring of 1886. Several studies of plaster casts in Van Gogh's sketchbooks may also have been made in Antwerp; see cats. 251-271.

<sup>2</sup> See Drawings 2, cats. 190 and 193, for example.

<sup>3</sup> Microscopic examination revealed small mineral particles in the soft black chalk which are also found in cat. 241.

<sup>4</sup> See the Introduction for the course of instruction at the academy and Van Gogh's teachers.

<sup>5</sup> Boime 1986, pp. 27 and 36. See the Introduction for more information about the use of plaster casts in drawing classes.

<sup>6</sup> Verlat 1879, p. 8: 'La statue antique, à côté du modèle vivant, sert à démontrer comment les anciens interprétaient la nature dans le sens du vrai et du beau' ('The antique statue, when seen next to its living model, serves to illustrate how the ancients interpreted Nature in terms of Truth and Beauty').

<sup>7</sup> See letters 159/138, 176/R3, 182/R4, 195/R7, 218/189, 466/381, 529/R57, 533/R58 and 544/433. In letter 218/189 of April 1882 Van Gogh tells of the argument he had with Anton Mauve about studying from plaster casts. He flatly refused to do so, and became so angry that he threw the plaster hands and feet that he had into the coal-bin, smashing them to pieces. 'And I thought, I will draw from casts only when these ones become whole and white again, and when there are no more hands and feet of living beings to draw from.'

<sup>8</sup> See letter 563/452.

<sup>9</sup> See letter 556/445.

From 18 January 1886 Van Gogh attended the evening Antiquities course which was taught by François Vinck, where the students made shaded drawings of plaster torsos, limbs and complete casts of classical sculpture.<sup>4</sup> At first he followed the daytime painting class given by Karel Verlat, but when it stopped at the end of January he switched to drawing in the daytime as well. From then on all he did was draw, during the day in the class taken by Eugène Siberdt, and in the evening first in Vinck's class and then at one of the drawing clubs where he could work from the (nude) model (see cats. 219-224).

The study of plaster models had been taught at academies throughout Europe since the 17th century, occupying a position in the curriculum between the copying of engravings and drawing from the live model.<sup>5</sup> It was eminently suitable for giving students a better understanding of the effects of light and shadow, and thus of the modelling of figures. The casts also helped the students learn the proportions of the human body and the classical ideal of beauty. The emphasis at the Antwerp academy was on the latter aspect.<sup>6</sup> The outline was the starting point when drawing from plaster models; modelling within the figure came second. 'They go so far as to say: "Colour and modelling aren't much, one can learn that very quickly, it's the contour that is essential and the most difficult" [563/452]. That approach, working from the outlines, is evident in *The discus thrower*, but Van Gogh also took considerable care over the illuminated and shaded passages, using hatching, cross-hatching and washes.

Although he had been fiercely opposed to academic teaching and studying from plaster casts during his Dutch years, Van Gogh became enthusiastic about working from them shortly after starting at the academy.<sup>7</sup> He felt that it had a good collection of casts, his only reservation being that the proportion of male to female figures was ten to one.<sup>8</sup> After years of drawing clothed figures he was delighted to be studying the body itself (even if it was only plaster) and its proportions. He saw immediately that this study would be extremely useful for drawing figures,<sup>9</sup> and also believed that studies of casts would be good preparation for the training he planned to follow in Paris. '[...] to be accepted somewhere in Paris one must have worked somewhere else first, and not be absolutely green any more, and one is always involved with people who have already worked at an academy for longer or shorter periods' [558/447].

Although Van Gogh found this form of study useful and fascinating in itself, he was less happy about the way he had to work from the casts. Concentrating on the contours rather than the modelling conflicted with his own views. 'The Greeks did not start from the contour, they started from the



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centres, from the nuclei' [558/447] was a saying of Delacroix's which Van Gogh had adopted as his personal credo in 1885 after reading Jean Gigoux's *Causeries sur les artistes de mon temps*.<sup>10</sup> He therefore saw his own theory more than vindicated by the shortcomings of the drawings made by his fellow students. 'The figures they draw are almost always top-heavy and are toppling over head first, not a single one is *standing* on its feet. And that *standing* must already be fixed in the very first plan' [558/447]. Siberdt told him: "First make a contour, your contour isn't right; I won't correct it if you do your modelling before having genuinely fixed your contour." So you see, everything comes down to that. And you should see how flat, how lifeless and how insipid the results of that system are' [563/452].

Van Gogh stuck stubbornly to his own approach, and used the study from plaster models to immerse himself anew in the problem of the contour as against solid mass.<sup>11</sup> His obstinacy, and the fact that he gave his fellow students "wrong" ideas, brought him into conflict with Siberdt.<sup>12</sup> Despite this difference of opinion (or perhaps because of it), Van Gogh enjoyed his time at the academy. He learned a lot, and developed a keener eye for his own work through examining the efforts of the other students.<sup>13</sup> He soon discovered that drawing came easily to him, and set himself the goal of searching for greater 'originality and broadness of conception'.<sup>14</sup>



218<sup>a</sup> Detail of cat. 218.



218<sup>b</sup> Photograph of the arcade with the academy's plaster casts, 1963. Antwerp, Royal Academy of Fine Arts.

That the many ‘male’ plaster casts at the academy included one of *The discus thrower* is known from an inventory of the casts in its collection from the period 1868–96.<sup>15</sup> There were in fact two discus throwers, a ‘Discobole se préparant’ and a ‘Discobole en action (lançant le disque)’, which is the version that Van Gogh drew. It can also be seen in a photograph of 1963 of the academy’s gallery of casts (fig. 218b), and was a feature of Matthijs van Bree’s teaching method, which was widely used at the academy (fig. 218c).<sup>16</sup>

There are various marble copies of Myron’s bronze *Discus thrower* (c. 450 BC),<sup>17</sup> with the head and the right arm in different positions. Van Gogh made his study after a cast of the marble variant in the Vatican (fig. 218d).<sup>18</sup> Plaster casts were made of the assorted discus throwers in the 18th century, very soon after they were excavated, and in the course of the 19th century every self-respecting drawing school and academy had one.

The difference of opinion between Van Gogh and Siberdt, which the artist himself describes,<sup>19</sup> was a little exaggerated by his fellow students in their recollections recorded in the 1920s and 1930s. They said that Van Gogh had been sent down to a lower class, or even that he never returned to the academy after the argument.<sup>20</sup> Van Gogh’s account, however, makes no mention of any such tension. When Siberdt began teaching the drawing class in early February he refused to believe that his pupil had never drawn from the antique before, and predicted that he would make rapid progress.<sup>21</sup> In fact, he had so much faith in Van Gogh that he allowed him to add backgrounds to his studies of plaster casts, which the other students were forbidden to do because they would ‘botch the drawing of the forms’ [559/448].<sup>22</sup>

When Van Gogh told him that he was thinking of going to study with Fernand Cormon in Paris, Siberdt tried to persuade him to stay in Antwerp. ‘You may do as you wish, but I tell you that Verlat has trained several very able students, and we attach great value to training pupils who are a credit to us, and I advise you most strongly to stay’ [559/448].

Just before Van Gogh left Antwerp, his teacher even had to admit that there was little or nothing to correct in his pupil’s last work.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, Van Gogh was relegated to the elementary course after the results of the final competition were made known.<sup>24</sup> When he submitted his drawing for the competition he had foreseen something of the kind, although not the drastic consequences. ‘Well, I am sure I shall come last, because all the drawings of the others are exactly alike, and mine is utterly different. But I saw how that drawing they will think best was made. I was sitting just behind, and it is correct, it is whatever you like, but it is DEAD, and so are all the drawings I saw’ [563/452].

<sup>10</sup> See Drawings 2, cat. 162.

<sup>11</sup> See letters 560/449 and 561/450.

<sup>12</sup> See letter 561/450.

<sup>13</sup> See letter 558/447.

<sup>14</sup> See letter 560/449.

<sup>15</sup> Library of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp, inv. 542.

<sup>16</sup> It is possible, of course, that the cast was only acquired later, but the bulk of the collection was put together in the 19th century. Matthijs van Bree, who was a lecturer at the Antwerp academy when his book was published, probably used the collection for his examples. See further the Introduction.

<sup>17</sup> Myron was a Greek sculptor and bronze-founder who was active c. 450–425 BC. The discus thrower is his best-known work.

<sup>18</sup> The discus thrower was excavated in Tivoli in 1791. Other versions are in the Museo Nazionale in Rome (two sculptures) and the British Museum in London. For further information see Haskell/Penny 1981, pp. 199–202.

<sup>19</sup> See letters 558/447 and 561/450.

<sup>20</sup> Richard Baseleer in an interview with Timon (pseudonym of Charles Bernard), ‘Vincent van Gogh à Anvers’, *Le Matin*, 13 November 1927; Victor Hageman in Louis Piérard, *La vie tragique de Vincent van Gogh*, Paris 1924, pp. 147–56; and in Emanuel de Bom, ‘Victor Hageman en herinneringen van Vincent van Gogh’, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 3 November 1938, quoted in Tralbaut 1948, p. 140.

<sup>21</sup> See letter 559/448.

<sup>22</sup> See letter 559/458.

<sup>23</sup> See letter 569/458.

<sup>24</sup> The decision to relegate him was made on 31 March 1886, a month after he left Antwerp. He was not the only one; no fewer than 17 students, one-third of the class, were sent down. (See the Introduction, fig. 8).

25 See letters 559/448 and 567/456.

26 Inv. d 412 V/1962.

27 This suggestion was first made in Heenk 1995, p. 136. In cat. 245, too, a drawing of a classical sculpture is combined with a figure study in a comparable pose.

28 See letter 559/448.

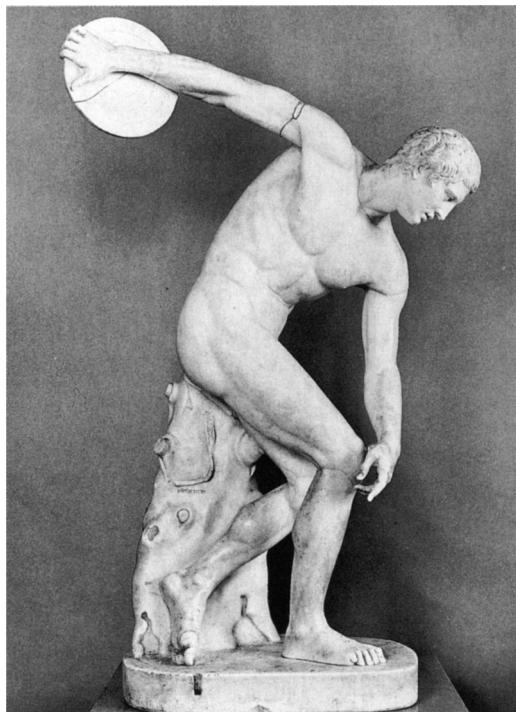
29 See Haskell/Penny 1981, pp. 274-79. The original sculptures were excavated in Rome in 1583, and plaster casts of them were circulating five years later. The largest portion of the group is now in the Uffizi in Florence. The tragedy of Niobe comes from Greek mythology. She had seven sons and seven daughters, and therefore considered herself superior to the goddess Leto, who only had two children: Artemis and Apollo. In punishment for Niobe's arrogance, Artemis and Apollo slew all of Niobe's children on the same day. Consumed with grief, the unfortunate mother was transformed into a rock.

Van Gogh's subsequent remarks about his drawing lessons make it possible to date *The discus thrower* a little more precisely within the period he spent at the academy, which lasted from 18 January to the end of February 1886.<sup>25</sup> The fact that the background has been filled in indicates that it was drawn in February, when Van Gogh began attending Siberdt's classes and was given permission to place the casts against a dark background. It was probably executed quite early on, in the first half of the month, because Van Gogh describes the work he did then as 'brusque', as opposed to that from the end of February which he regarded as 'more distinguished'. Although the drawing is quite detailed, the vigorous handling of line could certainly not be described as distinguished.

Van Gogh also drew the discus thrower in one of his sketchbooks (fig. 218e),<sup>26</sup> alongside a sketch of a man digging – an odd combination, at first sight. However, it is very possible that it reflects a view which he told Theo about in the third week of January 1886: 'I believe that for the making of peasant figures, for instance, it is very useful to draw from the ancients' [556/445].<sup>27</sup> What both figures do indeed have in common is a forceful pose with the legs apart and the backs bent.



218c Page from Matthijs van Bree, *Cours de dessin*, Antwerp 1821. Antwerp, Royal Academy of Fine Arts.



218d *The discus thrower*, c. 450 BC. Rome, Vatican Museums.

It is not known how many drawings Van Gogh made of plaster casts at the academy. He wrote to Theo at the beginning of February to say that he found the pace in Antwerp rather slow, and hoped that in Paris he could begin on a new drawing every one or two days.<sup>28</sup> If one assumes that the students spent three or four days on a detailed drawing, and that Van Gogh produced twice that much in the last four weeks because he was also drawing during the daytime, then he must have made at least 13 studies in his six weeks at the academy. The subjects of four of the drawings are known from the letters. In his first week with Siberdt he made a head of Niobe and a hand 'that might be done by Michelangelo. I drew that hand in a few hours, and it was the one he [Siberdt] liked best' [559/448]. Sections of the Niobe group, which consisted of 15 figures, were widely used in academies because of the great expressiveness of the heads (fig. 218f).<sup>29</sup> The third piece of sculpture which Van Gogh is known to have drawn was the *Germanicus*, for that was his entry for the competition that brought Vinck's evening class to an end. The entries were only judged after Van Gogh's departure from Antwerp, so he obviously left it behind. Although it is not known for certain which sculpture of *Germanicus* was drawn at the Antwerp academy, the most likely one is the version now in the Louvre (fig. 218g), which had been famous since the 17th century, was regularly depicted in books, and of which there were numerous plaster casts.<sup>30</sup> After the *Germanicus* he drew the female torso mentioned in the first paragraph, the style of which he considered so distinguished.<sup>31</sup>

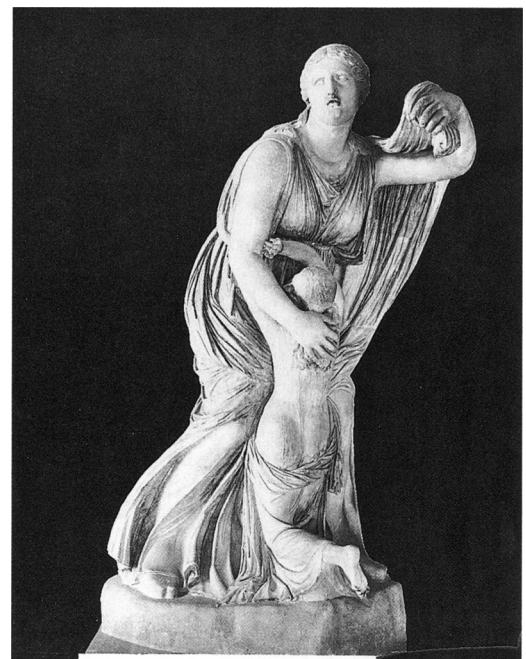


218e Sketchbook sheet (F- JH-), February 1886. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

<sup>28</sup> See Haskell/Penny 1981, pp. 219, 220.

<sup>29</sup> Julius Caesar *Germanicus* (15 BC-19 AD) was the commander of the legions on the Rhine from 13 AD, and led several campaigns against the German tribes. He spent the last years of his life in the eastern part of the Roman Empire. He was the father of Emperor Gaius, better known as Caligula, and the grandfather of Nero.

<sup>30</sup> See letters 566/455 and 567/456.



218f *Niobe and her daughter*, c. 300 BC. Florence, Uffizi.

<sup>32</sup> Baseleer in *op. cit.* (note 20).

<sup>33</sup> Baseleer said that Van Gogh was in Antwerp in 1889. At that time it was Piet van Havermaet who taught the painting class from the live model and the drawing class after antiquities, and it was he, supposedly, who twice sent Van Gogh down a class. According to Baseleer, Van Gogh remained in Antwerp for several months after leaving the academy.

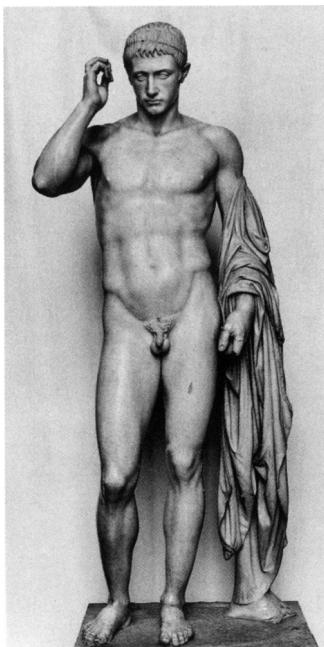
<sup>34</sup> They are listed in the inventory of the casts collection, *op. cit.* (note 15).

<sup>35</sup> See letter 558/447.

<sup>36</sup> See letters 562/451, 563/452 and 566/455.

Richard Baseleer, another of the academy students, remembered two other casts which he believed Van Gogh had drawn.<sup>32</sup> One was the *Venus de Milo*, which Baseleer said was the first sculpture Van Gogh studied when he joined the Antiquities course. 'Fine female, nice hips', he is supposed to have said before drawing a decidedly plump Venus. The teacher immediately sent him down to a lower class, where he drew the huge foot of the *Hercules Farnese*. Since Baseleer's recollections depart from the facts at important points, as well as from Van Gogh's own account in his letters and the reminiscences of others, one must treat them with caution.<sup>33</sup> Both pieces of sculpture were in the academy's collection of casts, incidentally, and there is a very sketchy study of the *Venus de Milo* by Van Gogh which bears no relation to Baseleer's description (see cat. 256).<sup>34</sup>

Acting on the advice of Verlat and Vinck, Van Gogh resolved to spend a year doing nothing but draw from plaster casts and the nude, for a thorough knowledge of the human body would stand him in good stead in his later work, his paintings included.<sup>35</sup> He would be following in the footsteps of some of his great idols. 'Didn't Delacroix and Corot and Millet, *later in their careers too*, keep thinking of the ancients and continue studying them? People who just study them *in a hurry* are of course missing the point entirely. The ancients require great serenity, a knowledge of nature, they require tenderness and patience, otherwise they are no help' [559/448]. It was not yet entirely clear just where he was going to work, but he was planning to go to Paris in the near future to continue his studies, either in a studio like Fernand Cormon's, in the Louvre or at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.<sup>36</sup>



2188 *Germanicus*, c. 460 BC. Paris,

Musée du Louvre.

## 219-224 Figure studies

Pitifully little has survived of the work that Van Gogh did at the academy and drawing clubs in Antwerp. He was probably so disappointed by the standard of teaching that he left his studies behind in Antwerp, or even destroyed them. He was not at all happy with the emphasis on drawing in which so much importance was attached to the outlines,<sup>1</sup> and would have had few sheets which he felt helped his development.

Only one study, of a plaster cast (cat. 218), was definitely drawn in Antwerp, but those from the live model are more questionable. Two drawings of a female nude and four studies of men were almost certainly made there, but slight doubts still remain.<sup>2</sup>

De la Faille's œuvre catalogue of 1970 dates a group of nine sheets to the Antwerp period, to which Hulsker added a few more in 1996. The latter regards them all as academy works, but De la Faille expressed no firm opinion.<sup>3</sup> The studies from the model, however, were not made at the academy but at drawing clubs set up by the students themselves, where Van Gogh practised in the evenings.

Although he was dismissive of the quality of the studies being made in the drawing class at the academy,<sup>4</sup> there is no evidence that he joined the course 'Dessin d'après le model vivant'. He certainly did not enrol for it, although that does not prove anything one way or the other, for he is not known to have enrolled for the painting class given by Karel Verlat either, which he certainly did attend. The deciding factor is the nature of the drawings themselves, which bear no resemblance at all to works produced in an academy. That is particularly true of the nude studies (cats. 219, 220), which are both of the same model captured with the vigorous, angular strokes familiar from Van Gogh's large figure studies from Nuenen. It was an approach that would not have been appreciated at the academy.

Back in 1882 Van Gogh had wanted to broaden his knowledge of working from the model by making studies of the nude. He was able to do so in The Hague thanks to the presence of his then companion Sien Hoornik. He doubtless made a number of nude studies of her, but only two have survived: *The great lady*, known from a small sketch, and *Sorrow*, a subject recorded in two drawings and a lithograph.<sup>5</sup> He probably worked

<sup>1</sup> See the Introduction and cat. 218.

<sup>2</sup> Otterlo 1990 places a group of drawings of musicians in the Antwerp period, but they were undoubtedly made in Paris (cats. 293-297).

<sup>3</sup> De la Faille assigns our cats. 223, 224, 241-244 and Appendix 2, no. 2.1 to Antwerp. Two other works which he places there have now been moved back to Nuenen, see Drawings 2, cats. 126 and 127. Hulsker follows De la Faille, but adds the works included here as cats. 241, 248 and 249.

<sup>4</sup> See letter 557/446.

<sup>5</sup> See Drawings 1, pp. 34, 35, and Van Heugten/Pabst 1995, pp. 39-43.



219 Standing female nude seen from the front



220 Standing female nude seen from the side

6 See *Drawings 2*, p. 25.

7 See letter 558/447.

8 Tralbaut 1948, pp. 170-72, discusses the clubs briefly, but was unable to obtain any firm, reliable information about them.

occasionally from the nude model when he was living in Nuenen, but any examples of that work have perished.<sup>6</sup>

Van Gogh says little about them in his letters, but the drawing clubs which he joined at the end of January 1886 presumably offered him the opportunity to draw from both the draped and nude model.<sup>7</sup> Almost nothing is known about these clubs, which have left no trace in the archives, but they were probably informal gatherings.<sup>8</sup> There is no indication that experienced teachers were involved, so there was no critical supervision. At most the students would have discussed each other's efforts among themselves.

Both nude studies are of the same woman. Van Gogh drew her in two different poses with dissimilar materials on identical sheets of pale grey paper from the Whatman factory. There can be no doubt that it is the same woman. Her face may not be very detailed, but her stocky frame and hefty legs are very distinctive.

She has her arms raised in the sheet where she is shown from the front (*cat. 219*), which has four small holes at the corners where Van Gogh pinned it to his drawing board. She is holding onto a piece of cloth or something similar which was fastened to the ceiling to enable her to hold the pose for longer periods. Van Gogh first drew in the main lines with charcoal. A thin horizontal line across the stomach indicates that he began by marking the proportions before sketching the figure. There is now almost nothing to be seen of this charcoal draft, for Van Gogh rubbed it off after completing the sheet. He then drew the outlines and details in red chalk over the charcoal in a departure from his usual practice, which was to lay the figure down first in black. The use of colour in his figure drawings is exceptional in every respect.

Van Gogh proceeded to develop the figure in red and blue, and also used the greasy lithographic crayon he had become so attached to in The Hague. Detail was then added to the face with the pencil and by scraping material off. The drawing is above all an attempt to get the proportions and outlines right. There is also some restrained modelling with shadows.

The drawing materials offer some support for assigning these drawings to the Antwerp period, for it was then that he first used these slightly greasy, coloured chalks. Similar types are found in his Paris drawings, but never in the nude studies that are known to have been made in the studio of Fernand Cormon (*cats. 238-250*). The nature of the Antwerp sheets also differs markedly from those done in Paris.

The second drawing of this Antwerp model is entirely in pencil (*cat. 220*) and emphasises her sturdiness even more, partly as a result of the shadows accentuating the muscles and joints. Rendering them was

probably the main purpose of this drawing. When judged solely on its merits as a study of a model it can hardly be described as very successful. The right leg and thigh meet in an anatomically impossible way, and the angularity of the flattened buttocks is a little exaggerated, even by the standards of Van Gogh's vigorous drawing style. All the same, the sheet does have a certain crude charm, and in its expressive power it recalls Van Gogh's large studies of Brabant peasants. This sheet, too, has pin-holes at each corner.

Four studies of clothed male models also seem to be the fruits of Van Gogh's evenings at the drawing clubs (*cats. 221-224*). They were certainly not done at Cormon's studio in Paris, for the pupils there worked only from the nude model (*cats. 238-250*). The working method points in the direction of the Antwerp drawing clubs. The spontaneous draughtsmanship ties in well with that of the female nudes, and stylistically the studies are closer to the Nuenen than to the Paris work. In addition, like the female nudes, two of the four sheets are on pale grey paper with the watermark J WHATMAN 1884 (*cats. 221, 222*). However, one should not attach too much importance to this, because Van Gogh later made regular use of this paper, which was readily available in the shops.

One of the two drawings shows a neatly dressed man seated in a chair in an unimaginative pose which suggests neither a particular activity nor a recognisable type of person (*cat. 221*). It was perhaps for that reason that Van Gogh could concentrate on a careful depiction, for both the man and the chair are more highly detailed than usual, with effective shading, convincing folds in the clothes and a face that could be identified from a photograph.

This *Seated man with a beard* also has traces of the charcoal with which Van Gogh made his first rough draft. He then worked the figure up with black chalk, which he smeared out a little with a moist sponge to add tone to the scene. An eraser was used here and there to create lighter passages. This is a manner of working which is very close to Van Gogh's handling of his Nuenen studies of models, and thus supports a dating in the Antwerp rather than the Paris period. Van Gogh pinned the sheet to his drawing board at top and bottom centre.

The model who posed for the *Standing man seen from the back* (*cat. 222*) is stockier than his seated colleague. He stands with his legs apart, his right arm raised and his fists clenched. A rope hanging from the ceiling helped him to keep this pose. He is wearing sturdy shoes, a baggy pair of workman's trousers and a shirt or blouse. On his head is a cap with the ear-flaps raised. It is not clear what the pose is meant to signify, but there



221 Seated man with a beard



222 Standing man seen from the back

9 They measure approximately 55 x 43 cm.

10 It is some 12 cm higher and wider (see, for example, *Drawings 1*, cat. 21).

11 See further *Appendix 2*, no. 2.1.

can be no doubt that this is a labourer. This sheet, too, is watermarked J WHATMAN 1884, and the free treatment of the figure suggests that it was another drawing made in one of the Antwerp drawing clubs.

There are traces of a complete first draft in charcoal which, as was the case with the female nude in coloured chalks (cat. 219), was eventually rubbed off. Van Gogh drew over the charcoal with pencil and then employed the discovery he had made in The Hague, which was to go over the pencil with black lithographic crayon at various points, most noticeably in the cap, beard and trousers. The smooth, underlying graphite enabled this crayon to be scraped off – a trick which Van Gogh used to obtain different shades in the trousers. The sheet has pinholes at all four corners.

A second *Seated man with a beard* (cat. 223), as stocky as the man in the previous drawing and possibly the same model, is the subject of a remarkably large sheet measuring 74.5 x 58.1 cm, much larger even than the studies of peasants made in the summer of 1885.<sup>9</sup> Van Gogh was used to working on a grand scale, but this figure study and the one on the other side of this heavy sheet of wove paper (cat. 224), which at 0.32 mm thick is roughly twice as heavy as the sheets Van Gogh normally used, are the largest he ever made, surpassing even the big figure studies he produced at the beginning of his career.<sup>10</sup>

The nature of this *Seated man with a beard* sets it apart from the other drawings discussed here. The figure was sketched swiftly, and both the initial draft, which Van Gogh vainly tried to erase, and the finished version are in black chalk. Accuracy was not what Van Gogh was after, but power of expression. All the lines, whether outlines or detailing, were set down with an energetic and sure hand. Van Gogh concentrated on the upper half of the figure; the legs and feet are unfinished.

The other side of the sheet has the fourth study after a clothed model, a *Seated man with a moustache and cap* (cat. 224). He is a working-class type with his cap tilted jauntily on his head, slumped lazily with his hands in his pockets and his legs spread. This study, too, is in black chalk alone. The figure was sketched quickly and forcefully, although less so than in the previous drawing, but is more detailed. Van Gogh took the time to give him a shadow and a stool on which to sit.

There is a second sheet with the same dimensions which managed to find its way into the catalogued œuvre, and its authenticity has never been called into question (see *Appendix 2*, no. 2.1). With its lovingly rounded curves, badly drawn hands and feet, and execution in charcoal alone (a material Van Gogh used for drafts but otherwise preferred to steer clear of),

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it has nothing to do with Van Gogh at all. Given the subject and the identical paper, it must be by a fellow student at one of the drawing clubs, and may have been exchanged for one of Van Gogh's studies."<sup>11</sup>

None of the six drawings which he made at the drawing clubs can be dated any more precisely than between his joining the clubs in late January 1886 and his departure from Antwerp at the end of February.



223 Seated man with a beard



224 Seated man with a moustache and cap

**219 Standing female nude seen from the front**

LATE JANUARY-LATE FEBRUARY 1886  
Charcoal, red and blue chalk, black lithographic crayon, pencil, on wove paper  
50.4 x 39.2 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 60 V/1962  
SD 1696 JH 1011

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 579, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 430, no. 2.379;  
Otterlo 1990, p. 179; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 453, vol. 2, pl. CCL;  
Heenk 1995, p. 137; Hulsker 1996, pp. 218, 219.

EXHIBITION  
1990 Otterlo, no. 133.

**220 Standing female nude seen from the side**

LATE JANUARY-LATE FEBRUARY 1886  
Pencil on wove paper  
50.4 x 39.2 cm  
Watermark: J WHATMAN 1884  
Unsigned

Inv. d 22 V/1962  
SD 1699 JH 1013

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
London 1962, p. 50, no. 31; De la

Faille 1970, pp. 580, 672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 431, no. 2.381; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 454, vol. 2, pl. CCL; Heenk 1995, p. 138; Hulsker 1996, pp. 218, 219.

EXHIBITION  
1962 London, no. 31 (as F 1363).

**221 Seated man with a beard**

LATE JANUARY-LATE FEBRUARY 1886  
Charcoal, black chalk, on wove paper  
50.9 x 39.2 cm  
Watermark: J WHATMAN 1884  
Unsigned

Inv. d 16 V/1962  
F 1370 JH 1087

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 119, vol. 4, pl. CXXXVII; De la Faille 1970, pp. 483, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 441, no. 2.441; Otterlo 1990, pp. 179, 188; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 119, 356, vol. 2, pl. CXXXVII; Heenk 1995, pp. 132, 138, 144; Hulsker 1996, pp. 232, 235.

EXHIBITIONS

1953 Assen, no. 41; 1953-54 Bergen op Zoom, no. 49; 1956 Haarlem, no. 50; 1971-72 Paris, no. 146; 1975 Malmö, no. 51; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 51; 1976-77 Tokyo, Kyoto & Nagoya, no. 47; 1990 Otterlo, no. 135.

**222 Standing man seen from the back**

LATE JANUARY-LATE FEBRUARY 1886  
Charcoal, pencil, black lithographic

crayon, on wove paper

50.8 x 39.4 cm  
Watermark: J WHATMAN 1884  
Unsigned

Inv. d 157 V/1962  
SD 1706 JH 1088

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 581, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 437, no. 2.418;  
Otterlo 1990, p. 179; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 456, vol. 2, pl. CCLII; Heenk 1995, pp. 138, 270; Hulsker 1996, pp. 232, 235.

EXHIBITION

1990 Otterlo, no. 134.

**223 Seated man with a beard**

LATE JANUARY-LATE FEBRUARY 1886  
Black chalk on wove paper  
74.5 x 58.1 cm

Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 224

Inv. d 359 V/1962  
F 1369v JH 1018

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62

V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

Lettres 1911, pl. XXXVIII; De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 118, vol. 4, pl. CXXXVII, as 1369; De la Faille 1970, pp. 476, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 432, no. 2.386; De la

Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 118, 356, vol. 2, pl. CXXXVII; Heenk 1995, p. 137; Hulsker 1996, pp. 218, 220.

EXHIBITIONS

1948-49 The Hague, no. 231; 1963 Humlebaek, no. 84; 1964 Washington & New York, no. 84; 1980 Mons, no. 30; 2000-01 Detroit, Boston & Philadelphia, unnumbered (not in Philadelphia).

**224 Seated man with a moustache and cap**

LATE JANUARY-LATE FEBRUARY 1886  
Black chalk on wove paper  
74.5 x 58.1 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 223

Inv. d 359 V/1962  
F 1369r JH 1017

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 118;  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 476, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 431, no. 2.385;  
Otterlo 1990, p. 185; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 118, 356, vol. 2, pl. CXXXVII; Heenk 1995, p. 137; Hulsker 1996, pp. 218, 220.

EXHIBITIONS

1956 Haarlem, no. 49; 1957 Nijmegen, no. 40; 1957-58 Stockholm, no. 47, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken & Gothenburg, no. 49; 1975 Malmö, no. 49; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 49; 1990 Otterlo, no. 132.

## 225-227 Panoramas

While he was in Paris Van Gogh made three paintings which are not only unique in his own œuvre but are rare in the gamut of Impressionist and Post-impressionist subjects: panoramic cityscapes (figs. 225a-c). Panoramic views looking out over the French capital are found as backdrops to a foreground scene, certainly in the early years of Impressionism, but almost never as the prime subject. Van Gogh's exceptional cityscapes painted from the hill of Montmartre, particularly the two large, horizontal ones, have a great sense of space, but the smaller one is rather less effective. The apparent vastness of the two large paintings is deceptive, for the angle of view is in fact narrow.

The paintings must have been made shortly after Van Gogh arrived in Paris, given the fairly dark palette and a brushstroke which is still very close to that of the works from Nuenen and Antwerp. The presumed date is spring 1886. There are also four drawings which can be regarded as preliminary studies for paintings of this kind and can therefore be dated to the same period. Not all of the elements recur in the paintings, but it is clear from their sketchiness that they were not works complete in themselves. Three of the drawings are in the Van Gogh Museum, while the whereabouts of the fourth are unknown (fig. 225d).

The *Butte Montmartre* rises some 100 metres above the level of the Seine, providing a view over the city that was a great attraction in the 19th century and was lauded in the 1878 edition of Baedeker for its grandeur: 'On a de ces hauteurs un vaste panorama, tant sur Paris que sur la plaine de St-Denis et le cours de la Seine, sur Vincennes et sur la vallée de la Marne'.<sup>1</sup> Although the hill is now covered with buildings which restrict the view, it is still a popular vantage point. It is conceivable that Van Gogh, who lived on Montmartre and was aware of the popularity of the view, saw a potential source of income in paintings of this kind.

The one in the Van Gogh Museum has been described as a composite of four drawings,<sup>2</sup> but that is incorrect. Only the *View of Paris with Notre-Dame and the Panthéon* (cat. 225) and the lost drawing can be associated convincingly with the canvas. They and the painting were made from a spot on the hill of Montmartre at the height of the Blute-fin and Radet windmills looking south. That approximate point can be established from the fact that

<sup>1</sup> Baedeker 1878, p. 205; in translation: 'From these heights one sees a vast panorama over Paris and over the plain of St-Denis and the Seine, over Vincennes and the Marne valley'.

<sup>2</sup> Amsterdam 1987, p. 152.

the silhouette of Notre-Dame on the left is partly overlapped by the roof of the church of Saint-Eustache – a situation only visible from that point. The other landmarks, from left to right, are a dome which is difficult to identify but might be that of the former Halle de Blé of the Halles complex, now the Bourse de Commerce, the roof and tower of Sainte-Chapelle, and the Panthéon. In the sketch reproduced here as fig. 225d, Van Gogh was looking a little more towards the south-east, for it includes both the Tour-Saint-Jacques and Notre-Dame. All of those buildings are more or less recognisable in the painting.

Van Gogh turned a little further to the south-east for his *View of Paris with the Hôtel de Ville and the Tour-Saint-Jacques* (cat. 226). Notre-Dame is no longer visible, but to the left of the Tour-Saint-Jacques are the outlines of the Hôtel de Ville, which was completed in 1882. This drawing was not used for one of the painted panoramas.

The *View of Paris with the Opéra* (cat. 227) is seen from a relatively low angle compared to the other drawings. Garnier's Opéra, here seen from the rear, dominates the scene as it rises out of a sea of roofs and chimneys. The ghostly shape looming up on the far right is the Dôme-des-Invalides. The Opéra also features in the painting in Basel (fig. 225b), but seen from a far higher vantage point, so the drawing could have had no part in preparing for it.

The stitching holes show that cats. 225 and 227 come from the same sketchbook, and both have fragments of the watermark ED & C<sup>ie</sup>. They are



225a *View of Paris* (F 261 JH 1101),  
spring 1886. Amsterdam, Van Gogh  
Museum.



225b *View of Paris* (F 262 JH 1102),  
spring 1886. Basel, Öffentliche  
Kunstsammlung Basel, Kunstmuseum.



225 View of Paris with Notre-Dame and the Panthéon



226 View of Paris with the Hôtel de Ville and  
the Tour-Saint-Jacques



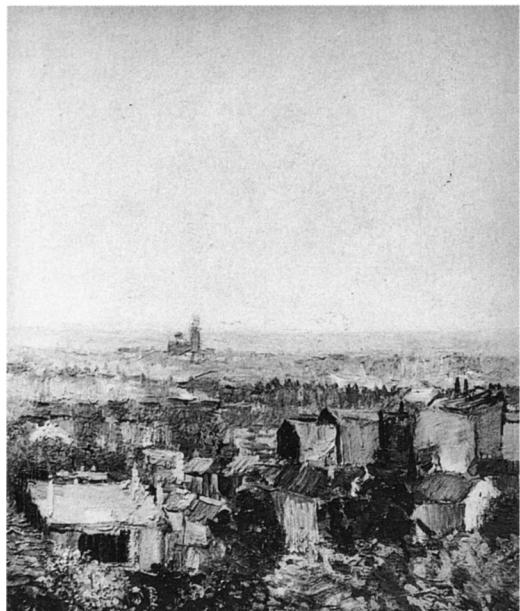
227 View of Paris with the Opéra

<sup>3</sup> This was pointed out in Heenk 1995, pp. 149, 150, but she did not group cat. 216 with the sketchbook sheets. They were torn out of the book, so not all the stitching holes are clearly visible, and occasionally there are minute differences in the intervals between them. Measured from the top they are 1.2, 3.5, 5.2, 17.2, 18.8, 19.0 and 21.3 mm.

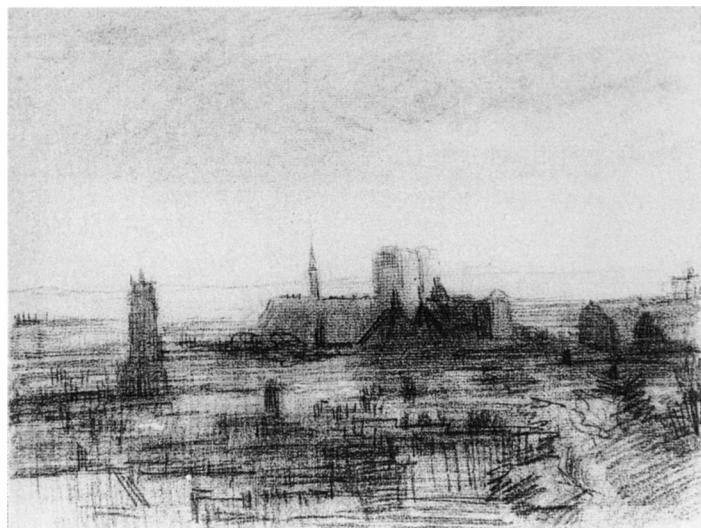
on blue-grey wood-pulp paper which has discoloured to brown-grey after reacting with light. The original colour can be seen around the edges of the *View of Paris with Notre-Dame and the Panthéon*, which were protected by a mount. The sizes of the drawings and the intervals between the stitching holes are the same, and are an almost exact match with those with the view of the *Grote Markt* in Antwerp and the study of the cathedral tower there (cats. 215, 216).<sup>3</sup> It can be assumed, then, that all these sketches came from the same book, or from drawing pads which were stitched on the same binder.

*View of Paris with the Hôtel de Ville and the Tour-Saint-Jacques* is not from a sketchbook but from a cut sheet of creamy white laid paper. It has its original deckle edges at the bottom and on the right, but the other two edges are cut. Since it measures 24.8 x 31.6 cm, it can be assumed that Van Gogh cut a sheet measuring approximately 63 x 49 cm into four pieces.

The three sketches in the museum were done rapidly in black chalk, and depict only the most essential details. Van Gogh then added accents in the sea of buildings with white chalk and an orange-brown chalk. Detail was added to the sky with white chalk in cats. 225 and 227.



225c *View of Paris* (F 265 JH 1100),  
spring 1886. Whereabouts unknown.



225d *View of Paris* (F 1389 JH 1096),  
spring 1886. Whereabouts unknown.

225 View of Paris with  
Notre-Dame and the  
Panthéon

MARCH-MAY 1886

Black, brown and white chalk,  
on laid paper that was originally  
blue-grey  
22.7 x 30.2 cm  
Watermark: remnants of ED & C<sup>ie</sup>  
in a cartouche, truncated at the  
top edge  
Unsigned

Inv. d 154 V/1962  
F 1387 JH 1098

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 121,  
vol. 4, pl. CXLII; London 1968,  
pp. 59, 60, no. 64; De la Faille  
1970, pp. 486, 487, 661; Amster-  
dam 1987, p. 442, no. 2.450;  
De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 121,  
360, vol. 2, pl. CXLII; Heenk  
1994, p. 36; Heenk 1995, p. 149;  
Hulsker 1996, pp. 237, 241.

EXHIBITIONS

1945 Amsterdam, unnumbered;  
1946 Stockholm, Gothenburg &  
Malmö, no. 21; 1946 Copen-  
hagen, no. 21; 1948 Luxembourg,  
no. 23 or 24; 1954-55 Bern,  
no. 124; 1955 Antwerp, no. 227;  
1956 Haarlem, no. 52; 1957  
Marseilles, no. 39; 1958-59  
San Francisco, Los Angeles,  
Portland & Seattle, no. 113; 1960  
Enschede, no. 29; 1966 Paris &  
Albi, no. 32; 1967 Lille & Zürich,  
no. 34; 1967-68 Dallas,  
Philadelphia, Toledo & Ottawa,  
no. 31; 1968 Liège, no. 31; 1968-  
69 London, no. 64; 1971-72

Paris, no. 148; 1972-73 Strasbourg  
& Bern, no. 56; 1975 Malmö,  
no. 52; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo,  
no. 52; 1976-77 Tokyo, Kyoto &  
Nagoya, no. 50; 1990 Otterlo,  
no. 143.

226 View of Paris with  
the Hôtel de Ville  
and the Tour-Saint-  
Jacques

MARCH-MAY 1886  
Black, brown and white chalk,  
on laid paper  
24.4 x 31.6 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 155 V/1962  
F 1388 JH 1095

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 121,  
vol. 4, pl. CXLII; De la Faille  
1970, pp. 487, 661; Amsterdam  
1987, p. 442, no. 2.451; Otterlo  
1990, p. 199; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, pp. 121, 360, vol. 2,  
pl. CXLII; Heenk 1994, p. 36;  
Heenk 1995, pp. 148-50; Hulsker  
1996, pp. 236, 237, 241.

EXHIBITIONS

1905 Amsterdam 11, no. 467  
[Dfl. 100]; 1914-15 Amsterdam,  
no. 134; 1923 Rotterdam, no. cat.  
known; 1926 Amsterdam, no. 45?  
(possibly cat. 227); 1948-49 The  
Hague, no. 233; 1954-55 Bern,  
no. 125; 1955 Antwerp, no. 228;  
1955 Amsterdam, no. 128; 1957  
Nijmegen, no. 41; 1957-58 Stock-  
holm, no. 46, Luleå, Kiruna,  
Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken &  
Gothenburg, no. cat. known;

1965-66 Stockholm & Gothen-  
burg, no. 77, no. cat. known,  
respectively; 1967 Wolfsburg,  
no. 98; 1971-72 Paris, no. 149;  
1982 Amsterdam, no catalogue;  
1990 Otterlo, no. 145.

227 View of Paris with  
the Opéra

MARCH-MAY 1886  
Black, brown and white chalk,  
on laid paper that was originally  
blue-grey  
22.7 x 30.1 cm  
Watermark: remnants of ED &  
C<sup>ie</sup> in a cartouche, truncated at  
the top edge  
Unsigned

Inv. d 354 V/1962  
F 1390 JH 1097

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 121,  
vol. 4, pl. CXLII; De la Faille  
1970, pp. 488, 661; Amsterdam  
1987, p. 443, no. 2.452; Otterlo  
1990, p. 199; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, pp. 121, 360, 361, vol. 2,  
pl. CXLII; Heenk 1994, p. 36;  
Heenk 1995, p. 149; Hulsker  
1996, pp. 236, 237, 241.

EXHIBITIONS

1905 Amsterdam 1, no. 352  
[Dfl. 250]; 1914-15 Amsterdam,  
no. 128; 1926 Amsterdam,  
no. 45? (possibly cat. 226); 1948  
Amersfoort, no. cat. known; 1948  
Luxembourg, no. 23 or 24; 1953  
Zundert, no. 49; 1953 Hoens-  
broek, no. 99; 1953 Assen,  
no. 43; 1953-54 Bergen op Zoom,

no. 51; 1956 Haarlem, no. 53;  
1957 Nijmegen, no. 42; 1961-62  
Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo &  
Boston, no. 109; 1962-63  
Pittsburgh, Detroit & Kansas  
City, no. 109; 1965-66 Stockholm  
& Gothenburg, no. 78, no. cat.  
known, respectively; 1967  
Wolfsburg, no. 99; 1967-68  
Dallas, Philadelphia, Toledo &  
Ottawa, no. 32; 1968 Liège,  
no. 32; 1968-69 London, no. 65;  
1971-72 Paris, no. 150; 1972  
Bordeaux, no. 51; 1972-73  
Strasbourg & Bern, no. 51; 1982  
Amsterdam, no catalogue; 1990  
Otterlo, no. 144.

## 228, 229 Park views

<sup>1</sup> George Eugène Haussmann (1809-1891) was the driving force behind the urban renewal of Paris during the Second Empire (1852-1870).

<sup>2</sup> They are cats. 232-237. See Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 136-41, who does not believe that the sheet with cats. 234 and 235 belongs to the group, probably because it is slightly smaller. This is because it no longer has its original dimensions, strips having been torn off on two sides. The thickness of the paper, though, is precisely the same as the other drawings in the group. See further cat. 235.

<sup>3</sup> Van Gogh was already writing about home-made sketchbooks back in 1881, see letter 191/164.

<sup>4</sup> See Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 18-20, for the sketchbooks Van Gogh made himself and for a reconstruction of the ways they were folded.

<sup>5</sup> That is the identification in the œuvre catalogues of De la Faille and Hulsker, as well as in De Gruyter 1961, p. 103, and Amsterdam 1987, p. 433.

The radical remodelling of Paris undertaken by Baron Haussmann led not only to the creation of a network of broad boulevards but also to an unparalleled expansion of public green space.<sup>1</sup> New parks were laid, and old ones formerly in private hands, like the Tuileries and the Jardin du Luxembourg, were thrown open to the public. The Bois de Boulogne, once a royal forest, was totally redesigned between 1852 and 1858. These parks soon became extremely popular with the bourgeoisie, who went there to stroll, go boating and ride in their carriages – diversions recorded by Impressionists like Renoir, Monet, Morisot and Manet.

Although Van Gogh's park scenes generally contain figures, they are an unobtrusive presence whose activities are restricted to strolling and sitting. The small sketch *Figures in a park* (cat. 228) with people out taking the air in an unidentified setting is the most Impressionistic of them. The walkers are being observed by the people seated on benches on either side of the path.

The drawing is on a stiff sheet of paper which was originally part of a sketchbook, of which only five pages with a total of seven drawings have survived.<sup>2</sup> It is mainly in pencil, with some black chalk indicating vegetation in the lower right corner. Along the left edge, where the sheet was attached to the sketchbook, are some small lines in red and blue chalk which have nothing to do with the scene and probably came from a drawing on the facing sheet. Other coloured chalk drawings from the same sketchbook are *View of Montmartre* (cat. 236) and *Woman walking her dog ('A La Villette')* (cat. 237).

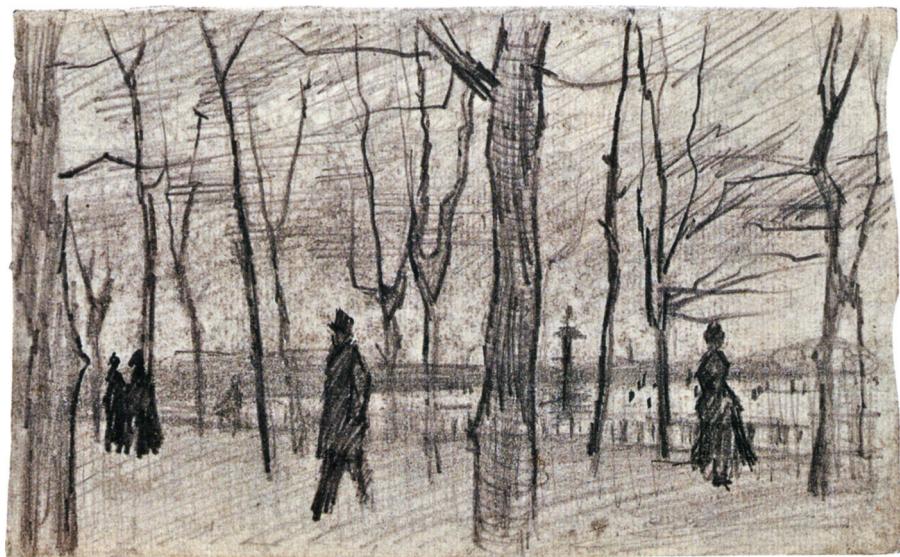
The dimensions of *Jardin du Luxembourg* (cat. 229), 9.7 x 15.8 cm, suggest that it too came from a sketchbook, and in a sense that is true, except that it was not manufactured but a pad which Van Gogh made himself by folding a sheet of laid paper.<sup>3</sup> This can be deduced from the fact that it contains a fragmentary watermark, which is rarely found in a sketchbook, that two of the adjoining edges (bottom and right) are original, whereas the other two are cut, and that the dimensions correspond to one-eighth of a full sheet.<sup>4</sup>

Van Gogh gave particular prominence to the two trees in the foreground, which were drawn last and serve to give this pencil sketch a greater sense of depth. There is considerable emphasis on the outlines throughout, but particularly so in these two trees.

It had long been thought that the location is the Tuileries,<sup>5</sup> but there are



228 Figures in a park



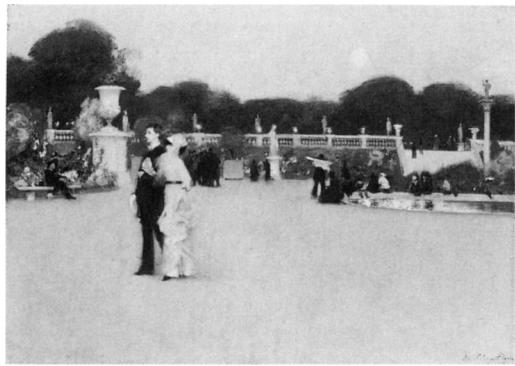
229 Jardin du Luxembourg

<sup>6</sup> Van der Wolk 1987, p. 20, was the first to suggest this location, with Paris 1988, p. 44, supplying the evidence confirming it.  
<sup>7</sup> One of the statues is of David, the other of a nymph. The sketchiness of the drawing makes it impossible to say which is depicted here.

<sup>8</sup> Two other park views drawn in the autumn of 1886 are discussed under cats. 274 and 275.

several clues which show that the setting is actually the gardens of the Palais du Luxembourg.<sup>6</sup> In the background, to the right of the central foreground tree, is a pillar with a statue on top which resembles the two pillars standing by the lake in the lower-lying part of the park.<sup>7</sup> The terrace in the foreground is separated from the lighter background by a balustrade which is most clearly visible behind the woman on the right. Both the balustrade and the pillar with its statue feature in the painting *In the Luxembourg gardens* by the American John Singer Sargent (1856-1925) (fig. 228a). Van Gogh depicted the gardens of the Palais du Luxembourg, the museum for contemporary art acquired by the state, on two other occasions, and the balustrade and the pillar reappear in both works, a painting (fig. 228b) and a sketchbook sheet (F 1385 JH 1030).

Van Gogh probably made *Jardin du Luxembourg* and *Figures in a park* during his first few months in Paris.<sup>8</sup> The trees are still bare in *Jardin du Luxembourg*, suggesting a date in the early spring of 1886. They have more leaves in *Figures in a park* in the form of horizontal hatching, and the sun is evidently strong enough for the lady in white in the left foreground to need a parasol. This drawing must therefore have been made in the spring or early summer of 1886.



228a John Singer Sargent, *In the Luxembourg gardens*, 1879. Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art (John G. Johnson Collection).



228b *Jardin du Luxembourg* (F 223 JH 1030), 1886. Williamstown, Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute.

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228 Figures in a park

MAY-JUNE 1886

Pencil, black chalk, on wove paper

10.1 x 16.8 cm

Unsigned

Inv. d 130 V/1971

F 1386 JH 1022

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-71  
V.W. van Gogh; 1971 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1971-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 121, vol. 4, pl. CXLI; De la Faille 1970, pp. 486, 487, 661; Amsterdam 1987, p. 433, no. 2.396; Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 136, 141; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 121, 360, vol. 2, pl. CXLI; Hulsker 1996, pp. 223, 224, 226.

EXHIBITION

1982 Amsterdam, no catalogue.

on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 120, vol. 4, pl. CXLI; De Gruyter 1961, p. 103; De la Faille 1970, pp. 486, 661; Amsterdam 1987, p. 433, no. 2.393; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 120, 359, vol. 2, pl. CXLI; Hulsker 1996, pp. 224, 242.

EXHIBITION

1953 Zürich, no. 61.

229 Jardin du Luxembourg

MARCH-APRIL 1886

Pencil on laid paper

9.7 x 15.8 cm

Watermark: remnants of a shield with a crowned lion holding a scimitar, encircled by the words

PRO PATRIA EENDRAGT MAAKT  
MAGT, truncated at the top left corner

Unsigned

Inv. d 127 V/1969

F 1383 JH 1025

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-69  
V.W. van Gogh; 1969 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1969-73

## 230 Restaurant menu

7 OR 8 APRIL 1886

Pencil, pen in black and originally purple ink, on wove paper

11.2 x 23.3 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 231

Inv. d 150 V/1971

F 1377 JH 1033

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-71  
V.W. van Gogh; 1971 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1971-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 120,  
vol. 4, pl. cxxxix; De la Faille  
1970, pp. 484, 661; Amsterdam  
1987, p. 434, no. 2.400; De la  
Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 120, 358,  
vol. 2, pl. cxxxix; Heenk 1994,  
pp. 30, 31; Heenk 1995, p. 155;  
Hulsker 1996, p. 226.

### EXHIBITIONS

1962 London, no. 45; 1971-72  
Paris, no. 147.

<sup>1</sup> *The complete letters of Vincent van Gogh*, 3 vols., Greenwich (Conn.) 1958, p. 512.

The Van Gogh Museum has four drawings made on the back of menus from the Du Chalet restaurant on the boulevard de Clichy (cats. 287, 300, 321, 322). These simple, printed pieces of paper were used for noting down orders and calculating the bill. Van Gogh took them with him after the meal and used the backs for sketches (see cat. 287).

There is a fifth menu in the museum with a drawing by Van Gogh, and it has always been assumed that it too was used to jot down a rapid sketch after a meal. The actual train of events was probably rather different. The handwritten text of the menu has faded so badly that it is no longer legible. All that can be seen is a correction and some deletions in pencil. However, the work was reproduced in colour in an English edition of Van Gogh's letters published in 1958, and there the ink is clearly visible (fig. 230a).<sup>1</sup> It was originally a purplish colour, and was probably aniline ink, which is very sensitive to light. The reproduction shows that Van Gogh also used it to work up parts of the drawing, where it has also faded away completely.

The first line records that this was the 'Menu du Soir 8 Avril 86'. Unlike the menus of the Du Chalet, this piece of paper was not meant to be taken away after the bill had been paid. As is still customary with *cartes du jour*, there were probably several handwritten copies of the menu for that particular day. When the customer had made his choice, the menu was taken away and shown to the next diner. Dishes that became unavailable as the evening progressed were deleted.

The theory that Van Gogh took the menu at the end of the evening and added the drawing fails to explain something rather odd: whoever wrote the menu left a very broad margin on the left measuring 3.2 cm across, more than a quarter of the entire piece of paper, which is 11.1 cm wide. Here and there it can be seen that the description of some of the dishes barely fits onto the line.

What actually happened is that the drawing was made first. Van Gogh then enlivened it with purple ink, and almost certainly wrote the menu. The handwriting cannot be identified as his for certain, but it is definitely similar. The hand is neat enough at the beginning of the lines at the top but then tails off, and the further the writer progressed down the menu the worse it got, for the dishes at the bottom of the list are in a hurried scrawl. This makes the writing irregular, but the words that look more spontaneous appear to be in



230 Restaurant menu

ancient

2 These conclusions were arrived at by Leo Jansen and Hans Luijten, who compared the handwriting with that in Van Gogh's letters.

3 Apart from 'à la', the faded words in pen beneath the pencil are illegible.

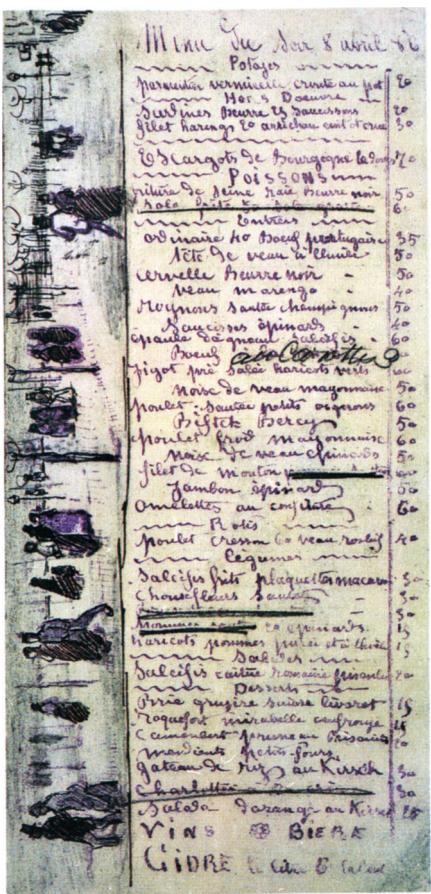
4 Heenk 1995, pp. 155, 156, wrongly associates this menu with those from *Du Chalet*, and concludes that the street scene is probably the avenue de Clichy seen from the window of *Du Chalet*.

Van Gogh's hand.<sup>2</sup> Someone else wrote the correction just above the middle, where the words 'au Carottes' were written after 'Boeuf' in firm pencil over some other words.<sup>3</sup> The purple additions in the drawing strengthen the suspicion that Van Gogh must have written the menu as well.

It seems that Van Gogh made an illustrated menu for the owner of a restaurant which he patronised occasionally. It was probably done as a kind gesture, for the modest nature of the sketch makes it unlikely that Van Gogh had any commercial intentions. It is impossible to say how the menu came back into the brothers' possession. Perhaps Van Gogh made several and took one as a memento. It was also folded up, for it has one vertical and three horizontal creases. On the back is a small sketch of a toadstool (cat. 231).

The name of the restaurant for which Van Gogh made this illustration is unknown. It was certainly not one at which he and Theo would have eaten every day, for although not exorbitant the prices were a bit steeper than those at the simple *Du Chalet*. There the price of a main course ranged from 30 to 50 centimes, but on the handwritten menu it was between 40 to 60 centimes. Dishes like 'Cervelle Beurre noir', 'veau marengo' and 'gâteau de riz au Kirsch' are hardly *haute cuisine* but do suggest some culinary refinement. The variety would also seem to rule out a restaurant serving up everyday meals. The dishes are not typical of a particular region, and nor do they stand out in any other way, so they provide no clues as to the establishment.

The drawing is simple, but it does show that Van Gogh had gained some skill in depicting a relatively busy street scene like this. It was done in pen in ink over a pencil sketch, and contains around 20 figures. At the far right is an indeterminate building, and from right to left there is a street with a carriage and an area with people walking. It is impossible to make out whether it is a park, a square or the edge of the Bois de Boulogne.<sup>4</sup> The dating of the menu shows that the drawing was made on 8 April 1886, or possibly the day before, when the menu for the following day was decided.



230<sup>a</sup> Cat. 230 in its original condition.

## 231 Shaggy ink-cap mushroom

On the back of a menu which he wrote out and illustrated himself (cat. 230) Van Gogh drew a pencil sketch of a shaggy ink-cap mushroom. It takes up only a quarter of the sheet because the paper was folded twice.<sup>1</sup>

The ink-cap, which is very common, grows from the spring to autumn beside roads, in woodland and meadows.<sup>2</sup> This is a young specimen, as the cylindrical cap is still attached to the stem by a veil. The cap itself is composed of large white scales. The ink-cap is edible when young and white, so it is very possible that Van Gogh came across it in the restaurant and made the sketch on the spot.<sup>3</sup> The mushrooms may have been used in the dish listed on the menu as 'Rognons sautée champignons', sautéed kidneys with mushrooms, so the drawing probably comes from the same period as the menu, which is dated 7 or 8 April 1886.

7 OR 8 APRIL 1886

Pencil on wove paper  
23.3 x 11.2 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 230

Inv. d 150 V/1971 verso  
F - JH -

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-71  
V.W. van Gogh; 1971 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1971-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 434,  
no. 2.401; Heenk 1995, pp. 155,  
156.

EXHIBITIONS  
None.

<sup>1</sup> It was later folded once more, and now has one vertical and three horizontal creases.

<sup>2</sup> The information about the shaggy ink-cap comes from Roger Phillips, Paddestoelen van West-Europa, n.p. 1993, pp. 176, 177.

<sup>3</sup> Heenk 1995, p. 156.



231 Shaggy ink-cap mushroom

## 232-235 Figures in the street

Van Gogh regularly sketched figures and scenes he encountered on the streets of Paris. It is often difficult to say when and where he jotted down these rough drawings. Their purpose may have been to capture figures in specific poses for later incorporation into composite scenes. That was their only value.

The four drawings discussed here are on both sides of two sheets of thick wove paper (*cats. 232, 233 and cats. 234, 235*). They range from a sketch with two very swiftly drawn scenes which are difficult to interpret (*cat. 235*) to a street scene with eight figures (*cat. 235*) which is reasonably worked up, in broad outline anyway.

The sheet with *cats. 232* and *233* definitely comes from the same disassembled sketchbook as *cats. 228, 236* and *237*. All the sheets from it measure 10.1 x 16.8 cm, and two of the sketches (*cats. 236 and 237*) were indisputably made in Paris. It is assumed that the others were also drawn in Paris, although there is a remote possibility that they were executed in Antwerp.

The paper of *cats. 234* and *235* is smaller than the sketchbook sheets at 11.0 x 8.0 cm. However, it has the same unusual thickness of 0.28 mm, and the structure of the wove paper is very similar. This strengthens the suspicion that it came from the same sketchbook and was reduced in size. The left and bottom edges (*seen from cat. 234*) show that strips of paper were torn off.

The dating adopted here for all four scenes is spring 1886, but it is possible that they were made later that year. One common feature is that all the figures appear to be idling away their time on a pleasant day in spring or autumn.

The seated figure in *Man on a bench* (*cat. 232*) is in pencil, as is the hasty sketch of a horse at lower left. The man's slumped pose, with his left leg resting on his right foot, is well observed, but Van Gogh omitted all details apart from his beard and peaked cap. The few swift strokes to the left of the bench may indicate shrubbery.

Van Gogh then used the pen to sketch two objects. On the left, by the man's feet, is a sharp pin with an eye at the top. Technical sketches of this kind are found in several sketchbooks and drawings by Van Gogh, some of



232 Man on a bench



233 People walking on a street in the evening



234 A man and a woman seen from the back



235 Sheet of sketches

---

which depict a perspective frame.<sup>1</sup> In this case, though, it is impossible to say what the object is, partly because there is no way of gauging its true size. The pen strokes by the legs of the bench on the right should probably be viewed upside down, and might be a sketch for a simple field easel.

*People walking on a street in the evening* (cat. 233) is drawn with black chalk which has been stumped here and there. The figures are walking on a street with an open door and windows behind them, possibly of a restaurant or café. Van Gogh was evidently studying the effect of backlighting at twilight or in the evening, for lamplight streams through the windows and the door, casting a strong shadow of the man about to enter the building. The two bare trees suggest that it is either early spring or late autumn, and judging by the lightly dressed pedestrians the weather must have been quite mild. There are vestiges of holes on the right side, where the sheet was stitched into a sketchbook.<sup>2</sup>

*A man and a woman seen from the back* (cat. 234) shows a couple with their arms around each other. The man is quite lightly dressed in a jacket, trousers and top hat, while the woman appears to be wearing a wrap. Once again it is a fine day. Van Gogh made the initial draft in black chalk and then reinforced the outlines with pencil. There are partial framing lines along the bottom and down the left side, although the latter was largely removed when a strip of the paper was torn off.<sup>3</sup>

*Sheet of sketches* (cat. 235) is on the back of the drawing of the couple, and consists of two almost indecipherable sketches. The pencil lines at lower right could be a first draft for the figures on the other side of the sheet. The framed scribble in black chalk at the top is very indistinct. Turning it 90 degrees to the left reveals what might be a few trees and perhaps a gateway.

<sup>1</sup> See *Drawings 1*, pp. 22-25, and *Drawings 2*, pp. 18-22.

<sup>2</sup> They are 0.9, 2.4, 3.6, 6.0, 7.1 and 8.9 mm from the top.

<sup>3</sup> Heenk 1995, p. 110, suggests that this sketch was made in Nuenen, citing a resemblance to a vaguely similar couple in a watercolour, F 1234 JH 954 (although she suspects that the latter was made by Willem van de Wakker). However, the man and woman on the right in that drawing, to whom she is probably referring (there are two other couples in the scene), appear to be turned towards each other, with the man seen from the back and the woman obliquely from the front.

**232 Man on a bench**

MARCH-MAY 1886

Pencil, pen in brown ink, on wove paper  
10.1 x 16.8 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 233

Inv. d 124 V/1962  
F 1380v JH 1020

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation (ratified in 1982); 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 120, vol. 4, pl. CXL; De la Faille 1970, pp. 485, 661; Amsterdam 1987, p. 432, no. 2.387; Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 136, 140; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 120, 358, vol. 2, pl. CXL; Hulsker 1996, pp. 223, 224, 226.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

**233 People walking on a street in the evening**

MARCH-MAY 1886

Black chalk on wove paper  
10.1 x 16.8 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 232

Inv. d 124 V/1962  
F 1380r JH 1019

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation (ratified in 1982); 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;

1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 120, vol. 4, pl. CXL; De la Faille 1970, pp. 485, 661; Amsterdam 1987, p. 432, no. 2.387; Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 136, 140; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 120, 358, vol. 2, pl. CXL; Hulsker 1996, pp. 223, 224, 226.

EXHIBITION

1962 London, no. 41.

**234 A man and a woman seen from the back**

MARCH-MAY 1886

Black chalk, pencil, on wove paper  
11.1 x 8.0 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 235

Inv. d 135 V/1962  
SD 1705r JH 1028

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation (ratified in 1982); 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 581, 672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 434, no. 2.398; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 455, vol. 2, pl. CCLI; Heenk 1995, pp. 110, 270; Hulsker 1996, pp. 224, 225.

EXHIBITION

1962 London, no. 40.

**235 Sheet of sketches**

MARCH-MAY 1886

Pencil, black chalk, on wove paper

11.1 x 8.0 cm

Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 234

Inv. d 135 V/1962  
SD 1705v JH -

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation (ratified in 1982); 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 581, 672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 434, no. 2.399; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 455, vol. 2, pl. CCLI; Heenk 1995, p. 110.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

## 236 View of Montmartre

MAY-SEPTEMBER 1886

Black, red and blue chalk, pen and brush in brown ink, wash, pen in black ink, on wove paper  
10.1 x 16.8 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 131 V/1969  
F 1394 JH 1181

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-69  
V.W. van Gogh; 1969 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1969-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 122,  
vol. 4, pl. CXLIII; De la Faille  
1970, pp. 488, 661; Amsterdam  
1987, p. 445, no. 2.466; Van der  
Wolk 1987, pp. 136, 137, 296,  
297; Otterlo 1990, p. 200; De la  
Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 122, 362,  
vol. 2, pl. CXLIII; Hulsker 1996,  
p. 260.

EXHIBITIONS  
1953 Zürich, no. 62; 1990  
Otterlo, no. 147.

<sup>1</sup> See cat. 292 for more information about the Moulin de la Galette as a place of entertainment.

<sup>2</sup> In the 1890s, a few years after Van Gogh's stay in Paris, that area degenerated into a slum known as the Maquis.

<sup>3</sup> The other four are all paintings (F 229 JH 1176, F 230 JH 1177, F 350 JH 1245 and F 266 JH 1175). A drawing with a view of the same buildings seen from a dif-

When Vincent and Theo moved to Montmartre in June 1886 it was mainly the southern slope that had been developed. Standing among the houses at the top of the hill were three windmills left over from the days when Montmartre still lay outside the city and was dotted with them. The remaining three had lost their original function, and two were now part of the Moulin de la Galette entertainment centre.<sup>1</sup> Montmartre still retained some of its rural character, with vegetable gardens and an abandoned quarry in the north-west.<sup>2</sup> The mills, gardens and quarry were within walking distance of Van Gogh's apartment in the rue Lepic, and he made more than 30 paintings and drawings on and around the hill of Montmartre, among them five views of its northern slope, of which this is one.<sup>3</sup>

Van Gogh drew this spacious view of Montmartre from the bend in the rue Caulaincourt, a street that wound around the north-western side of the hill. The photographer Henri Daudet (1847-1926) recorded a similar view in June 1887 (fig. 236a).<sup>4</sup> In the left background of Van Gogh's drawing are the three mills, from left to right Le Radet, Debray or the Moulin à Poivre, and Le Blute-fin. The long building with the stepped roof is the Ferme Debray, which was also part of the Moulin de la Galette complex. The hill itself is not shown in any detail, apart from a few small buildings and fences. The vegetable gardens were on the left, below the windmills, and on the right, behind the foreground figures, was the disused quarry.

The buildings shrouded in scaffolding on the right are new houses going up on the rue Caulaincourt. The men in the foreground could be builder's labourers, judging by their clothes and the fact that they appear to be carrying something. Van Gogh's vantage point is close to the one he chose for his painting *The hill of Montmartre with windmills* (fig. 236b), which also features the small buildings at bottom left.

Van Gogh drew this *View of Montmartre* in a sketchbook which is now lost.<sup>5</sup> The sketch is in black chalk beneath pen and brush in brown ink. Van Gogh enlivened the scene a little with touches of coloured chalk: red for some roofs and walls, and blue for the figures, the sky and the buildings in the middleground. The windmills on the skyline were worked up with pen in black ink of the kind used in *Woman walking her dog ('A La Villette')* (cat. 237).



236 View of Montmartre

ferent vantage point is no longer accepted as a Van Gogh. See Appendix 2, no. 2.2.

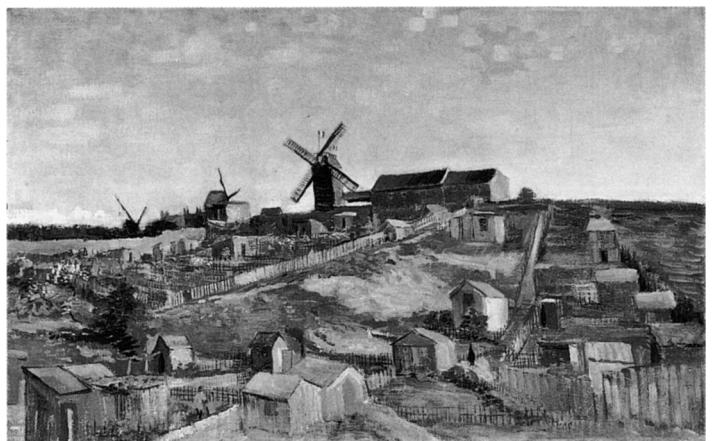
4 Daudet made numerous photographs in Montmartre in 1886-90 for the Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie du XVIIIe arrondissement, *Le Vieux Montmartre*. The society was founded in 1886 and concerned itself with the buildings, monuments and streets in the area. See Martigny 2000, pp. 138, 139.

5 In addition to View of Montmartre they are cats. 228, 232-235 and 237. See Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 136-41, and cats. 228, 229, note 2.

The drawing is generally dated to the autumn of 1886 without any supporting arguments, although there is absolutely nothing, such as vegetation, to indicate that it was that time of year. A closer dating can only be based on affinities with other drawings from the Paris period. The most suitable candidate is *Woman walking her dog* ('*A La Villette*'), which was also drawn with pen and ink and coloured chalks. Both works are also from the same sketchbook. Since it was very probably made in the spring or summer of 1886, that is also the date now given to the *View of Montmartre*.



236a Henri Daudet, photograph  
*Le vieux Montmartre, Le Moulin Debray vu de la rue Caulaincourt*, 19 June 1887.  
Paris, Musée Montmartre.



236b *The hill of Montmartre with windmills* (F 266 JH 1175), 1886. Otterlo, Kröller-Müller Museum.

## 237 Woman walking her dog (‘A La Villette’)

*Woman walking her dog* (‘*A La Villette*’) is in a category of its own among the drawings which Van Gogh made in Paris. In the first place, the fat woman takes up a good deal of the picture space, unlike the figures in his other scenes of people on the street or in parks.<sup>1</sup> This, together with her working-class appearance and little dog, recalls the workers depicted on so many occasions by Jean-François Raffaëlli (1850-1924) (fig. 237a). It was a year previously, in Nuenen in June 1885, that Van Gogh had discovered Raffaëlli, whose work and artistic ideas, immediately fired him with enthusiasm.<sup>2</sup> He saw parallels between the Frenchman’s distinctive urban labourers and his own peasant figures in Brabant, and believed that everyday subjects of this kind constituted the heart of modern art.<sup>3</sup> It is not known whether Van Gogh met Raffaëlli in Paris, but he almost certainly followed the publication of his illustrations and prints closely, and saw his paintings at exhibitions.<sup>4</sup>

Van Gogh perceived that same aspect of modernity in the figures of Honoré Daumier (1808-1879),<sup>5</sup> which he found anatomically incorrect and therefore all the more true to life. The woman in this drawing, with her sturdy, compact body, has affinities with Daumier’s figures, especially with the fat woman on a poster in the background of Daumier’s *La parade* (fig. 237b). The similarity is so close that one suspects Van Gogh had actually seen that drawing. He certainly owned a print of it, but there the woman is more detailed and less of a caricature.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the type of woman and the amount of space she takes up, the fact that the drawing has an inscription sets it apart. The only other annotated drawing from the Paris period is the *Window in the Bataille restaurant* (cat. 288).<sup>7</sup> That, though, is descriptive, whereas this one has a literary flavour. Written at lower right are the words ‘De son métier elle ne faisait rien. Le soir elle balladait son chien à la Villette’ (‘A job? She didn’t have one. She walked her dog each evening to La Villette’).<sup>8</sup> The inscription is a quotation from a chanson by Aristide Bruant (1851-1925) called ‘A La Villette’, which tells of the activities of a young pimp in that Paris district. The eighth of the 14 verses runs as follows:

MAY-SEPTEMBER 1886

Pencil, pen in black ink, wash, green, yellow, blue and pink chalk, on wove paper  
16.8 x 10.1 cm  
Unsigned  
Annotated at lower right: *De son métier elle ne faisait rien. Le soir elle balladait son chien à la Villette*

Inv. d 134 V/1962  
SD 1704 JH 1035

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation (ratified in  
1982); 1962-73 on loan to the  
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;  
1973 on permanent loan to the  
Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
London 1962, p. 59, no. 43; De la  
Faille 1970, pp. 581, 672; Welsh-  
Ovcharov 1976, pp. 143, 144;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 434, no. 2.403;  
Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 136, 138;  
Otterlo 1990, p. 200; De la Faille  
1992, vol. 1, p. 455, vol. 2, pl. CCII;  
Heenk 1995, p. 243; Hulsker 1996,  
p. 226.

EXHIBITIONS  
1962 London, no. 43; 1990  
Otterlo, no. 146.

<sup>1</sup> For the minor role which figures usually play in the park and street scenes see cat. 228, 229, 232-235, 274 and 275.

<sup>2</sup> See letters 514/414 and 519/416. While he was in Nuenen, Van Gogh read the introduction Raffaëlli wrote for the catalogue of an exhibition he had in 1884 in a

room in the avenue de l'Opéra. On Van Gogh and Raffaelli see also M.E. Tralbaut 1955 III.

3 See letter 522/418.

4 Raffaelli exhibited at the Salons of 1886 and 1887 and at the Exposition Internationale de Peinture et de Sculpture at Georges Petit's gallery from 15 June to 15 July 1886.

5 See letter 522/418.

6 Inv. t 1058 V/1962.

7 Cat. 288 is signed as well as annotated.

8 The spelling of 'balladait' with double l is a slip of the pen. *La Villette* is the quarter bordering the north-east side of Montmartre.

9 With thanks to Michael Hoyle, who tracked down the source of the inscription. For the full text of the chanson see [www.lechatnoir.free.fr/historique/chat-noir/bruant/05\\_bruant\\_villette.htm](http://www.lechatnoir.free.fr/historique/chat-noir/bruant/05_bruant_villette.htm).

10 This inscription was first noticed by Welsh-Ovcharov 1976, p. 144.

11 Coquiot 1923, p. 119, and André Roussard, *Dictionnaire des lieux à Montmartre*, Paris 2001, pp. 70, 101, 102.

12 Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, *Germinie Lacerteux*, Paris 1864. Van Gogh read this novel between the summer of 1883 (letter 362/298) and the summer or autumn of 1887 (letter 576/W1). He depicted it in one of the still lifes with novels which he painted in the latter half of 1887, F 360 JH 1349.

13 For Van Gogh and Le Mirliton see cats. 293-297, note 1, and cat. 273 for Van Gogh and *Le Chat Noir*.

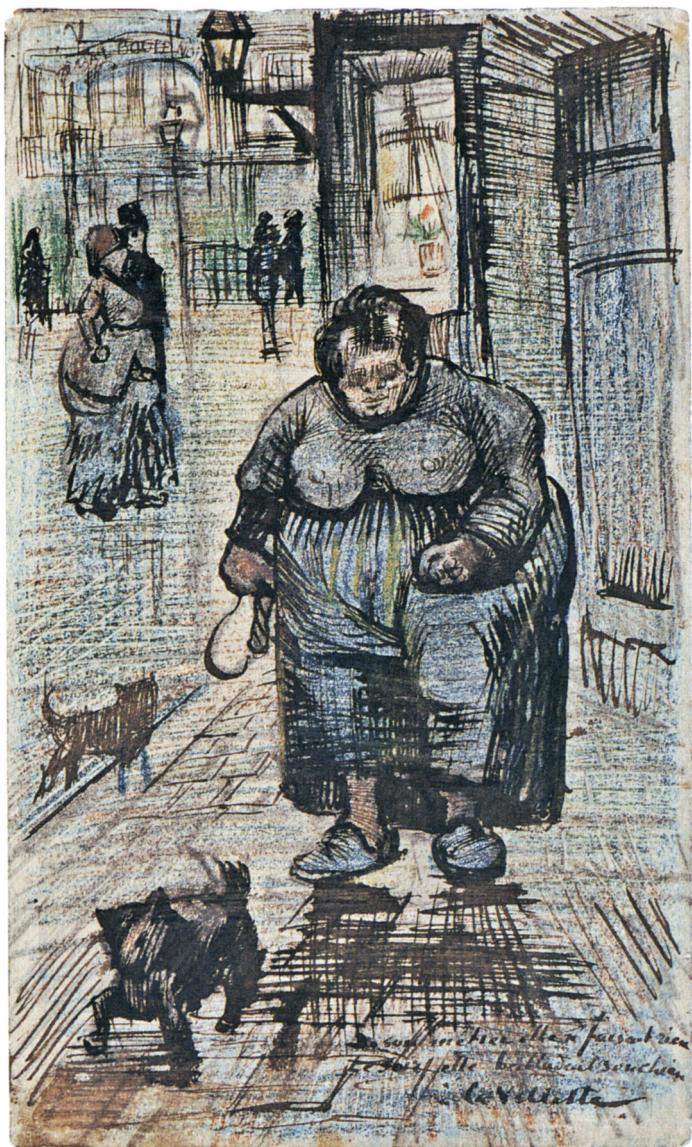
'De son métier i' faisait  
rien,  
Dans l'jour i' baladait son  
chien,  
La nuit i' rinçait la  
cuvette,  
A la Villette'.<sup>9</sup>

Van Gogh changed the protagonist's sex and omitted the third line of the verse.

The woman and her dog are walking on the pavement, she holding its lead in her right hand. Van Gogh drew several stumps of a tail one beside the other, so the animal appears to be wagging it. There is a second, sketchy little dog standing half on and half off the pavement. The perspective of the front of the house on the right is a little odd. The wall with its windows runs both beside and behind the woman, and it is unclear how the two windows relate to each other. The large one is seen obliquely, while the small one is viewed almost head on. It is impossible to make out whether the house had an extension which took up all the pavement or whether Van Gogh had trouble depicting it properly. Along with a few other figures there is a building in the left background with the words 'Bal Boule Noir' on the wall.<sup>10</sup> This was a famous dance-hall at 120, boulevard de Rochechouart which had just closed when Van Gogh arrived in Paris. The *La Cigale* concert hall opened its doors on the same spot in September 1887 (fig. 237c).<sup>11</sup> Although Van Gogh could never have visited the *Bal Boule Noir*, he certainly knew of it from the novel *Germinie Lacerteux* by the De Goncourt brothers.<sup>12</sup>

The cabaret *Le Chat Noir* opened at 84, boulevard de Rochechouart in 1881, and one of the regular performers was Aristide Bruant. When it moved to the rue Laval (now the rue Victor-Massé) in 1885, Bruant took over the old cabaret and renamed it *Le Mirliton*. Van Gogh is known to have visited *Le Mirliton* at least once in the company of Toulouse-Lautrec, who was a friend of Bruant's.<sup>13</sup> It is not known whether Van Gogh deliberately chose this boulevard as the location for the drawing inspired by Bruant's song, or whether it was sheer coincidence.

Van Gogh made the initial sketch with broad, pencilled lines, traces of which are still visible in the woman and the lamppost in the background. He worked the scene up very carefully with the pen in black ink, considerably reducing the size of the lamppost and adding quite a lot of colour with green, blue, yellow and pink chalk. He then went over the entire sheet with



237 Woman walking her dog  
(*'A La Villette'*)

<sup>14</sup> The hard pencil which Van Gogh used to get this tone scored the paper badly.

<sup>15</sup> Only six other drawings from this sketchbook have survived: cats. 228, 232-236. See Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 136-41, and cats. 228, 229, note 2.

<sup>16</sup> On this point see the Introduction and cat. 273.

<sup>17</sup> De la Faille places it in the first half of 1886, while Amsterdam 1987 and Hulsker 1996 date it more specifically to the spring of that year. In Otterlo 1990 it is given the broader date of 1886.

the pencil, creating a grey tone.<sup>14</sup> The inked lines indicating the shadows of the woman and the dog were blurred with the brush.

As indicated by the inscription, Van Gogh wanted to capture the mood of evening, which he did by combining blue and green chalk with the grey tone of the graphite. The lantern on the wall of the house is burning, and light comes from the small window behind the woman, both of them casting the shadows of the woman and her dog on the pavement.

Van Gogh made this caricature-like drawing on a sheet from a sketchbook which has since been disassembled.<sup>15</sup> It clearly meant more to him than just a sketchbook study, as can be seen from the high finish, the inscription and the fact that it was torn out of the book very neatly. It is possible that Van Gogh was assessing his prospects as an illustrator.<sup>16</sup>



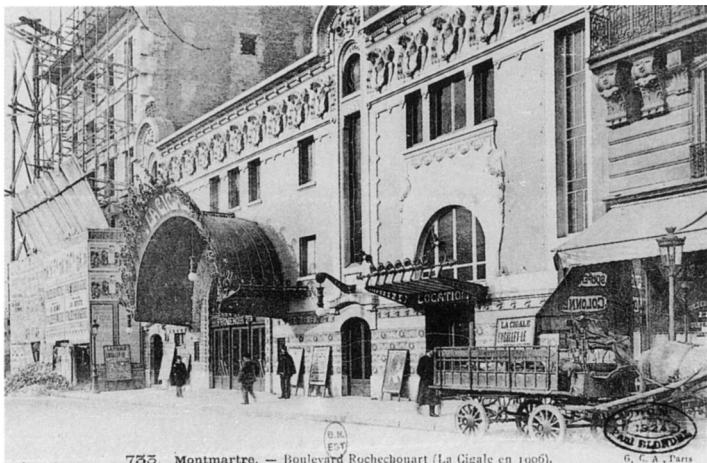
<sup>237a</sup> Jean-François Raffaëlli, *Seller of garlic and onions*, illustration from: *Les types de Paris*, Paris 1889.

Since the scene was drawn in a sketchbook, it can be assumed that the initial sketch was made on the spot. The layout of the streets shows that this was no imaginary location, for across from the *Bal Boule Noir* on the boulevard de Rochechouart is the entrance to the rue Violet-le-Duc. It is possible that Van Gogh worked the scene up back at home.

In the past the drawing has generally been dated to the first half of 1886,<sup>17</sup> but since the woman is going out for an evening walk without a coat it can be assigned to the warmer months of the year, spring or summer 1886.



237b Honoré Daumier, *La parade*,  
c. 1878. Glasgow, Glasgow Museums,  
The Burrell Collection.



237c Photograph of La Cigale, 1906.  
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.

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## 238-250 Studies of the nude in Cormon's studio

Van Gogh continued his training in the studio of Fernand Cormon (1845-1924) by drawing from plaster casts and the live model. The group of life drawings, which is discussed here, is smaller than hitherto believed. Closer examination of six studies, which have always been regarded as drawings of a nude man, shows that they were actually made after a plaster model of a classical bronze sculpture, the so-called *Idol* (cats. 253-255, 262, 263 and 268). The group was whittled down even further when another sheet was removed from the œuvre (see Appendix 2, no. 2.3). With 12 nude studies, the balance has tipped very firmly towards the studies of plaster casts, of which there are 23. Two of them (cats. 245, 246) are combined with drawings of nudes, and will therefore be examined here.<sup>1</sup>

It is not clear whether these two groups of surviving works give a representative picture of Van Gogh's output during his time with Cormon, but the ratio is tilted so much towards the casts that it can be assumed that they were his main objects of study. Nor is it known whether he started by drawing casts before moving on to the nude, as was customary in the academic curriculum, but that does not seem very likely. Van Gogh was an experienced artist by now, so the liberal Cormon would have allowed him to practise those disciplines side by side – an opportunity he would have seized with both hands. What is striking is that the studies of casts generally look more finished – an aspect which will be discussed at greater length in the entry dealing with that group (cats. 251-271). The works were probably executed between the autumn of 1886 and January 1887 which, as explained in the Introduction, is considered to be the period when Van Gogh studied with Cormon.

No archival material dealing with Cormon's studio has survived from the second half of the 1880s, so for an idea of his training methods we have to rely on the testimony of his students. There are several such sources, but not one goes into much detail about Cormon's theories. Although the nuances differ, it is clear that he was quite easy-going, and gave his students a relatively free rein. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901), who had already had lessons from the strict Léon Bonnat,<sup>2</sup> was at first quite disappointed by the leniency of his new teacher.<sup>3</sup> This was probably not due to indolence on Cormon's part, but to his belief in the freedom of personal

<sup>1</sup> This entry examines 12 studies of nudes and one of feet (cat. 250). Two of the drawings also have studies of plaster casts (cats. 245 and 246). There are 21 studies purely of plaster casts which Van Gogh made at Cormon's studio. Of the nudes discussed in this entry, both Hulsker and De la Faille assign cats. 241, 244 and 248 to the Antwerp period. Heenk 1995, pp. 144-45, believes that all the nude studies discussed here were made at Cormon's in Paris, and adds 221 and F 1727 JH 610 to the group. On the latter sheet see note 20 below.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph-Florentin-Léon Bonnat (1834-1922) was best known as a portrait painter.

<sup>3</sup> Schimmel 1991, no. 50, p. 70.

<sup>4</sup> On this see Hartrick 1939, p. 43.

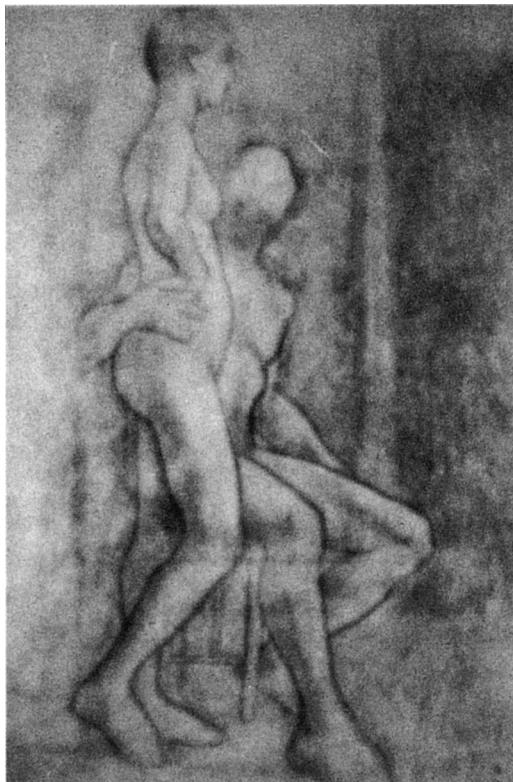
<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 48.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*. On Hartrick and Cormon's studio see also the Introduction.

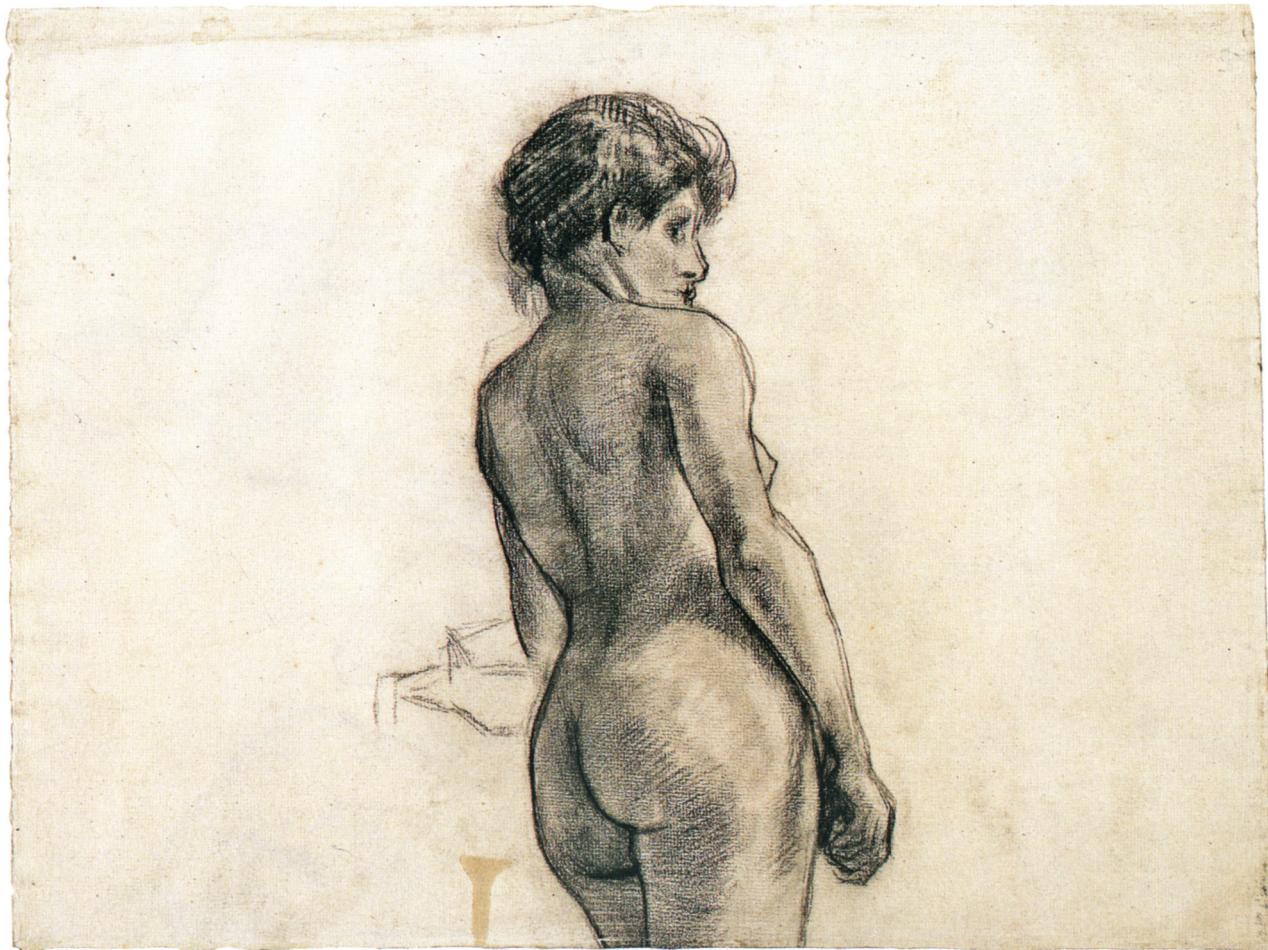
<sup>7</sup> Destremau 1996, p. 178, gives a few examples.

development. There was admittedly no room in his studio for the most modern, Impressionist ideas,<sup>4</sup> but he was evidently equally averse to being associated with conservative academism, for when a pupil accused him of that in 1886 he was so furious that he closed his studio for the entire summer.<sup>5</sup> Archibald Standish Hartrick described him as follows: 'I should say that he had excellent brains, was an admirable teacher, more sympathetic to novelties than most of his kind'.<sup>6</sup> Other students commended him in similar terms.<sup>7</sup>

The surviving, sparse information about the drawing lessons in the studio sheds little light on Van Gogh's studies. His fellow student Louis Anquetin (1861-1932) described how a drawing was started. A vertical line the length of the planned figure was drawn on a sheet measuring 45 x 60 cm, with three horizontal lines at the top, bottom and middle. The student then had to find those lines, as it were, in the person posing for him in order to establish where the relevant contours of the model crossed the drawn assisting lines. That was done with the pencil. The proportions were then



238a Emile Bernard, *Seated male and standing female nudes*, 1886. Private collection.



238 Standing female nude seen from the back

239 A woman's legs



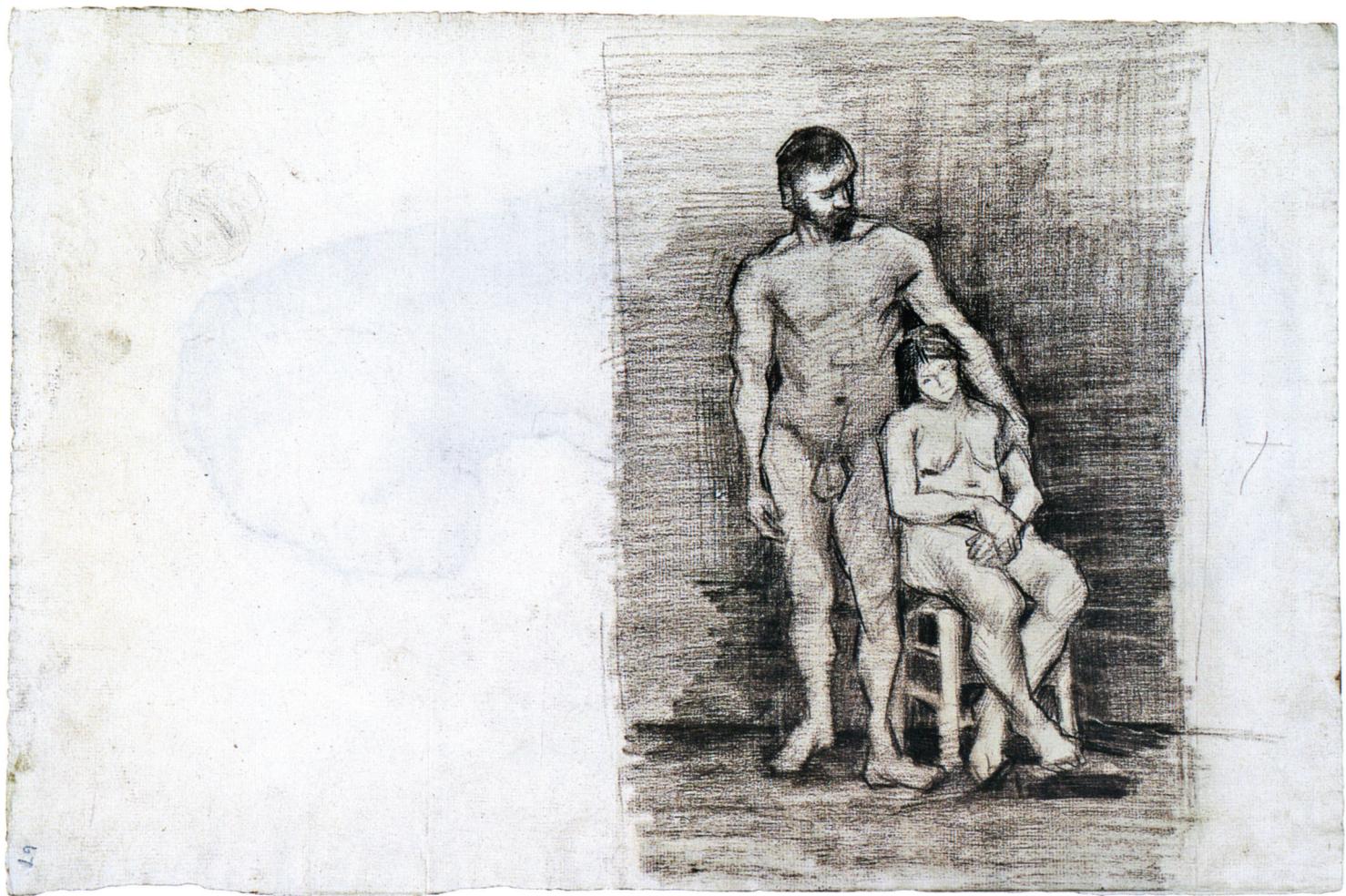


240 Seated male nude seen from the back

B.3997

74

1369 A  
HET MILLE



241 Standing male and seated female nudes

measured using the handle of the brush – Anquetin said that a pencil was just as suitable – which the draughtsman held at arm's length in a direct line between his eye and the model so as to transfer the correct contours to the paper.<sup>8</sup> This hallowed method is still in use today.

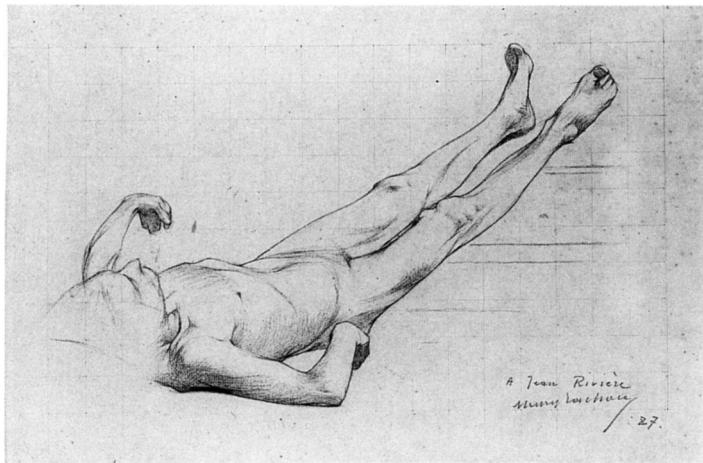
This is the only account we have of Cormon's form of instruction. It seems implicit in Anquetin's account that Cormon placed the emphasis on searching for the correct contours, as was customary in French academic teaching, before studying the masses and volumes. Nothing has come down to us about the use of neutral backgrounds, or of hatching or stumping to render the shaded passages. To some extent this can be deduced from the works of various students, for not only do we have Van Gogh's drawings but also a large group of studies by Toulouse-Lautrec in the museum bearing his name in Albi, as well as a sheet by Emile Bernard (fig. 238a) and a drawing by Henri Rachou (fig. 238b).<sup>9</sup> Those works, too, give an idea of a drawing master who was not all that rigid in his teaching methods.<sup>10</sup> None of Van Gogh's works focuses solely on the correct contours – the pure form of the so-called *dessin au trait* – although the shading effects are sometimes no more than rudimentary. That kind of drawing is found even less frequently with Toulouse-Lautrec.<sup>11</sup> The study sheets of both artists can mainly be described as *dessins ombrés* – studies in which the figure is modelled with shadows. In France that was traditionally done with the aid of hatching.

<sup>8</sup> Anquetin 1912, n.p., quoted in Destremau 1996, p. 176.

<sup>9</sup> Henri Rachou (1856-1944) was a landscape painter from Toulouse.

<sup>10</sup> See Boime 1986, esp. pp. 24-36, for the way drawing was taught at French academies in the 19th century.

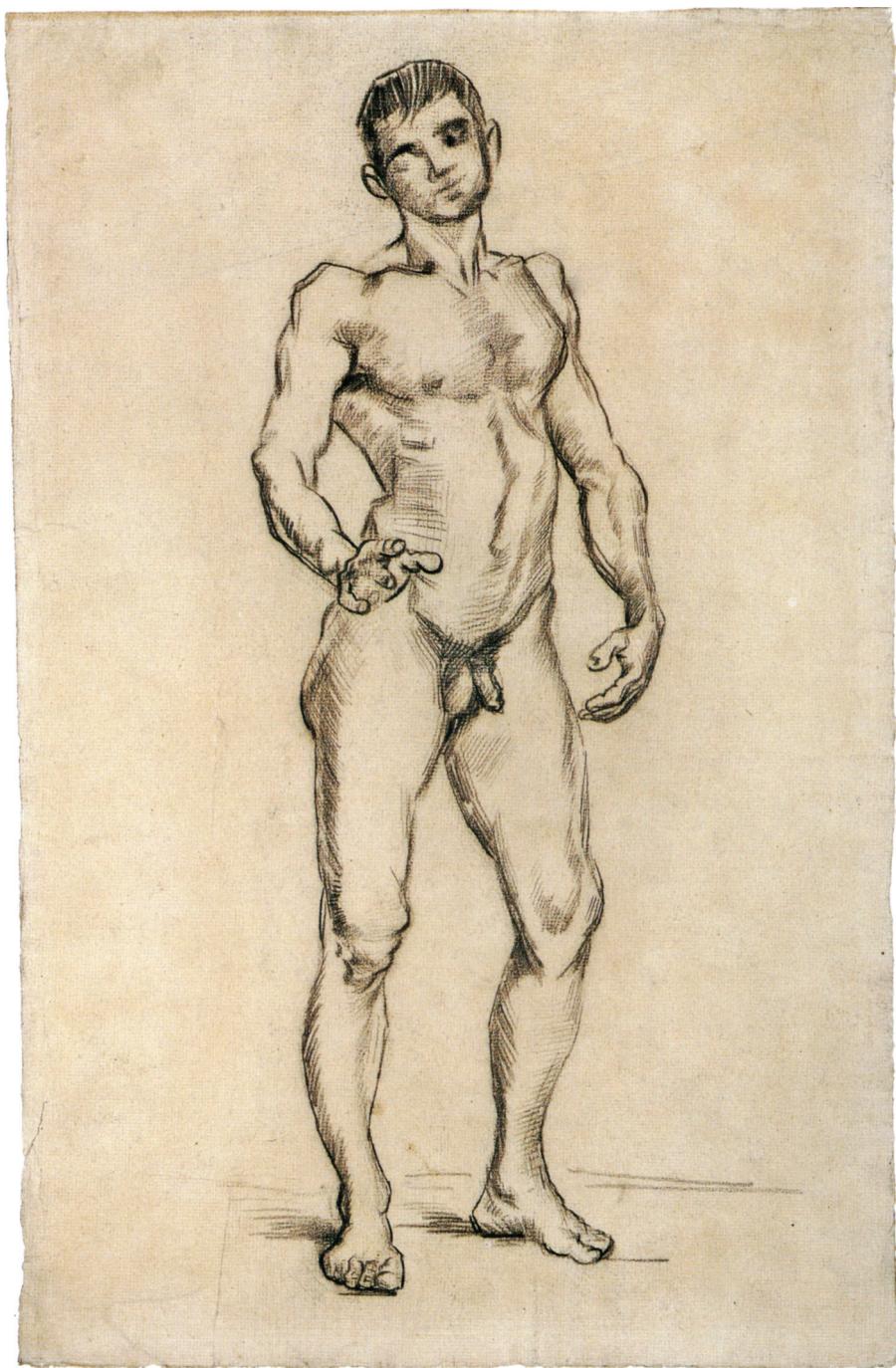
<sup>11</sup> The academic work of Toulouse-Lautrec and his period of study with Cormon is discussed in Murray 1991, pp. 39-89.



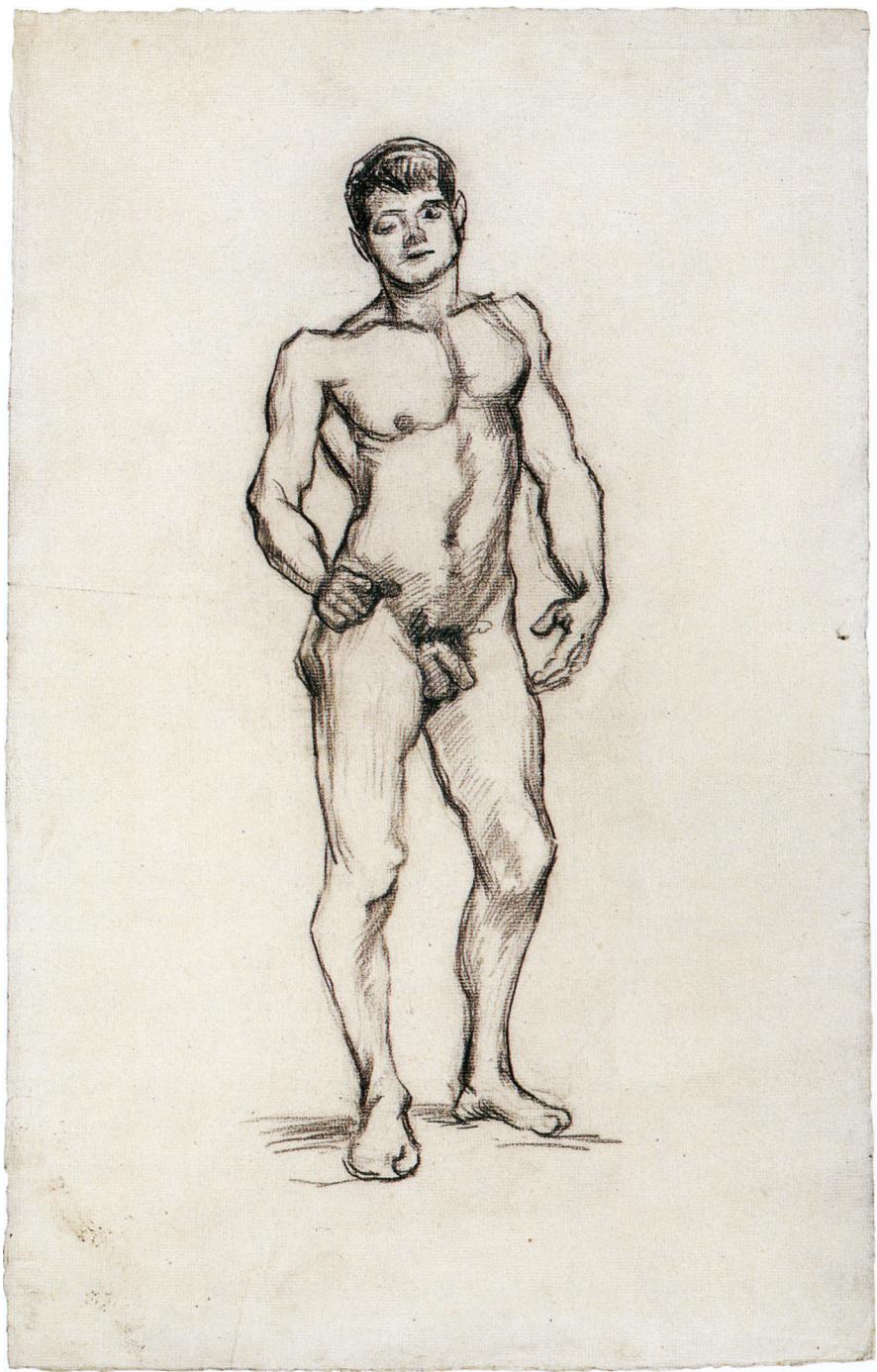
238b Henri Rachou, *Reclining man*, 1887. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



238c Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Reclining man*, c. 1886. Albi, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec.



242 Standing male nude seen from the front



243 Standing male nude seen from the front

<sup>12</sup> Until recently, no academic study by Rachou was known. When we visited Toulouse, M. Jean Penent, curator at the Musée Paul Dupuy, put us in touch with the Galerie Moulins, where the sheet published here is preserved. It is annotated 'à Jean Rivière / Henri Rachou 87', and came to the gallery owner from the Rivière family.

<sup>13</sup> He had experimented with it early in his career but did not care for it very much; see *Drawings 1*, p. 30, note 35.

<sup>14</sup> Letter 687/539.

<sup>15</sup> The woman may be the model in a study by Toulouse-Lautrec (Dortu 1971, D 2.590).

<sup>16</sup> Dortu 1971, D 2.444.

<sup>17</sup> An X-ray photograph reveals that it was painted over a flower still life, the genre with which Van Gogh tried to brighten up his palette when he was in Paris. See the Introduction, fig. 13.

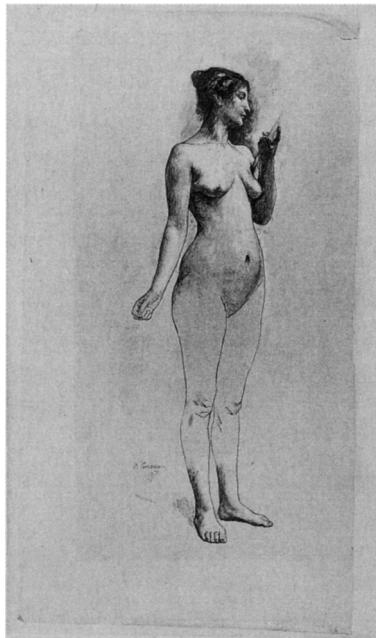
The use of a stump had long been controversial, but had become acceptable by this date, and it can be seen from the works of Van Gogh and Toulouse-Lautrec that stumping was standard practice in the studio. The only known nude study by their fellow student Henri Rachou, a foreshortened reclining model whose pose is comparable to that in several of Toulouse-Lautrec's sheets (figs. 238b, c), also gives the impression of light-handed supervision.<sup>12</sup>

There is little evidence of the assisting-line method described by Anquetin in Van Gogh's studies of the nude model, the *académies*, or after plaster casts (*à la bosse*). In only a single work from the latter category (cat. 263) is there a faint vertical line in pencil which might be one of them. They are plainly visible in drawings by Cormon himself (fig. 238d) and in several academy works by Toulouse-Lautrec. There are various explanations for their absence in Van Gogh's drawings. On the one hand it is possible that he did use them but removed them once they had served their purpose. In most of the figure and cast studies there are fragmentary traces along the contours of the charcoal that Van Gogh used to sketch in the rough outlines before setting to work with black chalk. He then removed the charcoal contours with a feather. Charcoal can be brushed off, but black chalk adheres to the paper much better, so would be left behind. If Van Gogh used thin assisting lines in charcoal, they could also be removed. The simple explanation for the fact that they are so visible in Toulouse-Lautrec's drawings is that he worked almost exclusively with charcoal, so could not be so selective in what he removed as Van Gogh could with his more durable black chalk. Charcoal is found only sporadically in Van Gogh's œuvre, and then almost always as an auxiliary material.<sup>13</sup>

The more likely explanation, though, is that Van Gogh largely dispensed with Cormon's system. In a letter from Arles in September 1888 he reminded Theo that he had not agreed with his teacher about measuring a motif.<sup>14</sup> Cormon needed to do so, but Van Gogh worked mainly by intuition. It is very conceivable that this difference of opinion was the main reason why Van Gogh only studied for such a short period in Paris.

The size of the paper mentioned by Anquetin, 45 x 60 cm, is only a little smaller than Van Gogh's sheets, although most of his studies are on half sheets. Only two figure studies are on full sheets, cats. 238, 240 (and Van Gogh later tore the second of those in two), whereas all of Toulouse-Lautrec's are.

It can be deduced from the latter's many studies from the live model that those who posed at Cormon's were always nude, for there is a not a single clothed figure in the entire 150 sheets. It is partly for this reason that



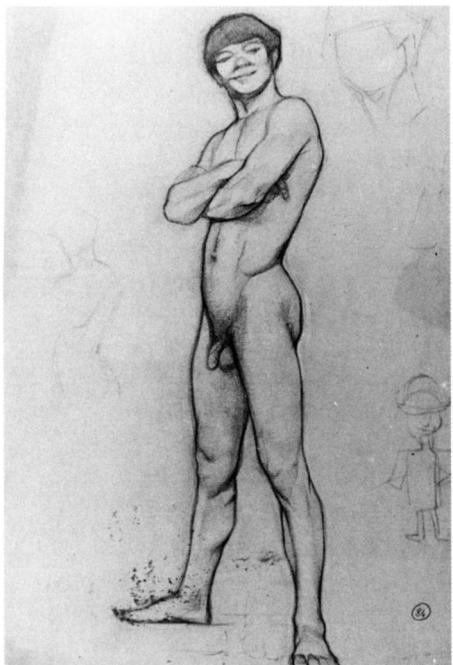
238d Fernand Cormon, *Standing female nude holding a stick*, 1897. New York, Shepherd Gallery.

Van Gogh's studies of draped models do not belong in the Paris period, as already stated (see cats. 219-224), but in Antwerp.

That the nude studies discussed here were indeed made in Cormon's studio is demonstrated by several striking aspects of this group and of the studies after plaster casts, and by a number of features which they have in common with works by Toulouse-Lautrec and Cormon himself. The combination of studies of plaster casts and the nude on the same sheet points irrefutably in the direction of the Paris studio, for it was only there, and not at the academy in Antwerp, that Van Gogh had the opportunity to practise both disciplines. *Idol and sketches of Venus* (cat. 254) has a *Standing female nude seen from the back* (cat. 238) on the other side. It is a sheet which Van Gogh used for a full-length study and then tore into two unequal parts.<sup>15</sup> On the back of the portion with the nude's legs (cat. 239) is another study of a cast (cat. 267). This combination of casts and nudes is also found in *Seated male nude seen from the back* (cat. 240) and *Standing male and seated female nudes* (cat. 241). The back of the first has a study of a plaster bust after an original by Antonio del Pollaiuolo (cat. 259), while that of the second has a *Torso of Venus* (cat. 265). It is known that the bust was in Cormon's studio, for Toulouse-Lautrec also drew it there (see cats. 251-271).

Three other drawings, two black chalk studies (cats. 242, 243) and a pencil and ink sketch (cat. 244) are of a young man with an athletic physique. The evidence that he posed at Cormon's is provided by a study which Toulouse-Lautrec made there of a young man whose figure, facial features and dark hair closely resemble those in Van Gogh's studies (fig. 238e). He also seems to be the subject of a drawn portrait which Toulouse-Lautrec made in the same period.<sup>16</sup>

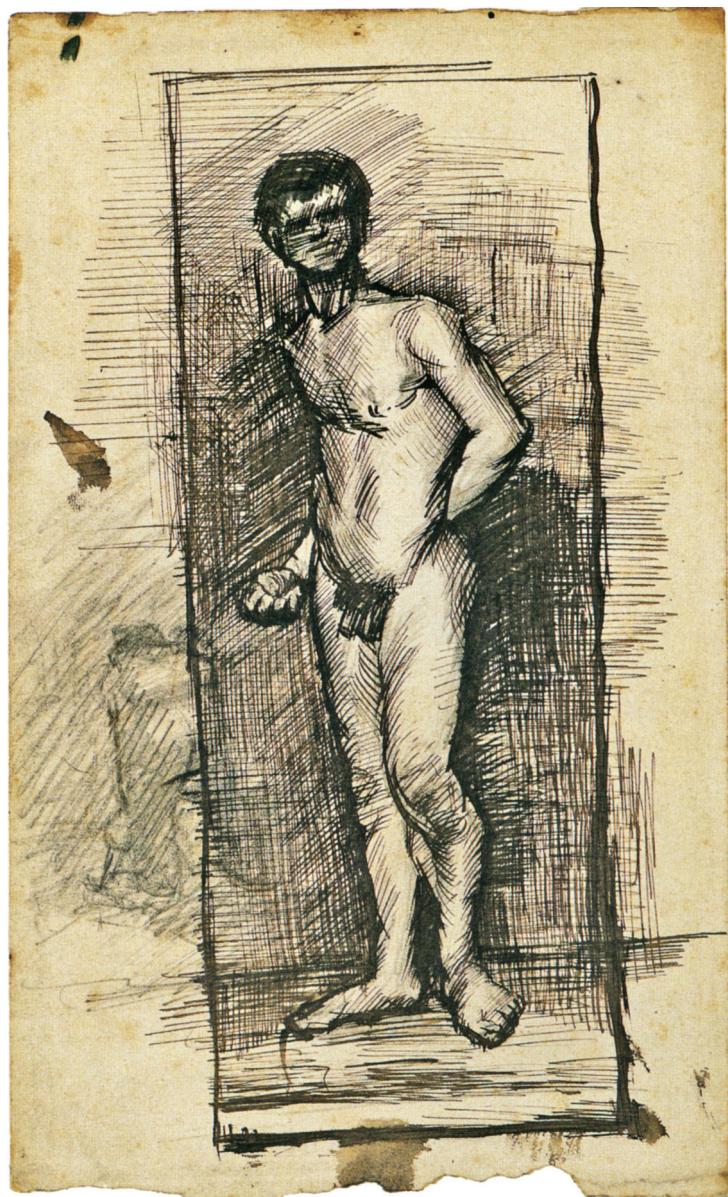
Several nude studies of a girl aged about seven can be traced to Cormon in several ways. In the first place, a nude child features in a drawing by the teacher himself (fig. 238f), demonstrating that he considered it important to study young nude models. Secondly, the combination of plaster casts and studies of the girl on the same sheets once again indicates that they were made in the studio. A full-sized sheet of laid paper has a study of a plaster *Venus* on the left half of the verso, and on the other half, turned through 180 degrees, the timid-looking girl seated on a low stool with her back against the wall (cat. 245). Half of the other side of the sheet (cat. 246) is taken up by a study of Houdon's *L'Ecorché* and a smaller sketch of the *Venus* found on the verso. On the other half are four small studies of the little girl. Another drawing, on a quarter sheet, shows her from the front (cat. 247). She is also the subject of a small painting by Van Gogh (fig. 238g), which is itself a study.<sup>17</sup>



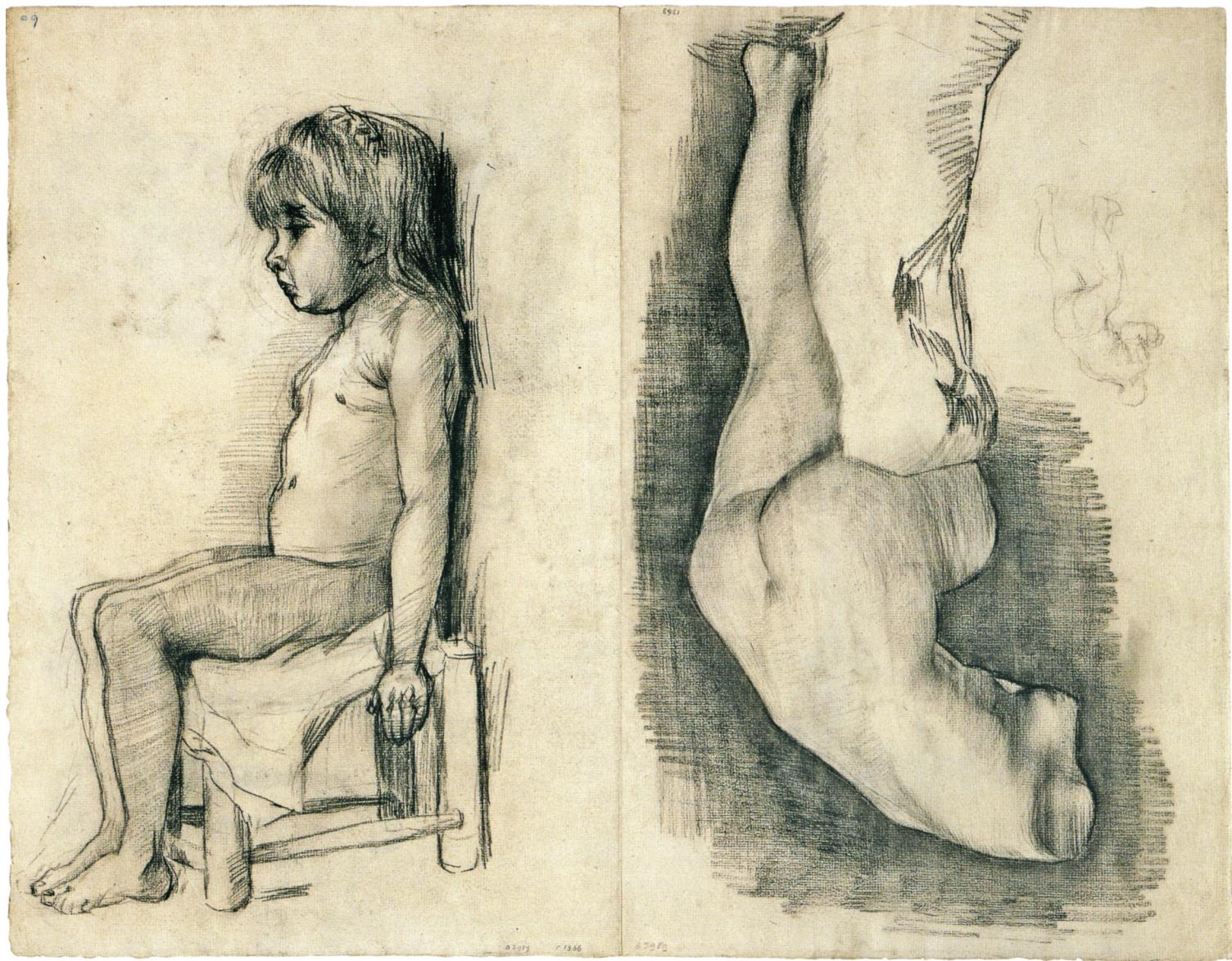
238e Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec,  
*Standing male nude seen from the front*,  
c. 1886. Albi, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec.



238f Fernand Cormon, *Young girl*,  
c. 1884. New York, private collection.



244 Standing male nude seen from the front

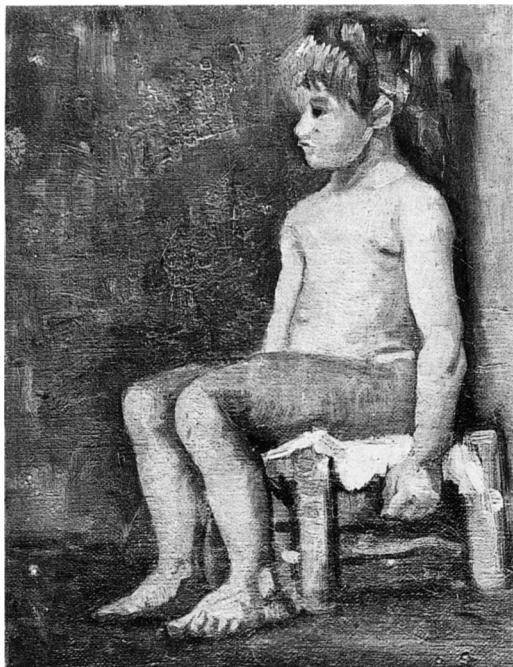


245 Seated girl and Venus

18 The drawing reproduced here is Dorts 1971, D 2.477, the other is D 2.531.

19 In Albi we examined 144 of the nude studies preserved there (the numbers used here refer to Dorts 1971), 137 of which have a Michallet watermark. They fall into two groups, some being on thin laid paper with an elongated watermark, the remainder on heavier laid paper with a more compact watermark. Of the other seven works, one has no watermark (D 2.513), one has the mark L.BERVILLE Lalanne (D 2.567), one has the mark AL PL BAS (D 2.455), three are marked ED & Cie PL BAS (D 2.430, 2.466 and 2.518), and the last has a.g.m. GLASLAN (D 2.505). Only D 2.618 of the drawings of plaster casts is not on Michallet paper but on tracing paper without a watermark.

20 F 897 JH 63 and F 27 JH 610 respectively. On the latter sheet, which is a sketch of a hand and probably parts of a leg, only the contours have been worked up; the details are very sketchy. Hulsker assigns it to Nuenen, De la Faille to the studies of hands made at Saint-Rémy. Heenk 1995, p. 145, dates it to Paris on the evidence of the watermark. We place it, tentatively, in



238g *Nude girl, seated* (F 215 JH 1045),  
October 1886-January 1887.

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

The rather cursory *Seated female nude* (cat. 248) was also made in Cormon's studio, for the model is almost certainly the woman who appears in two works by Toulouse-Lautrec. Her face, although sketchy in the Van Gogh, is similar, her hair is pinned up in both cases, and there is a distinct resemblance in the slender but rather compact physique (fig. 238h).<sup>18</sup> The same model may have been used for *Standing female nude seen from the back* (cat. 249), judging by the coiffure and the figure, but the rear view makes it difficult to be absolutely certain. There are technical points of correspondence between the two female nudes: both are in pencil, and the fall of light on the hair is suggested in a similar way. The standing woman is on a sheet of wove paper watermarked J WHATMAN 1884 which was not used for any of the other Paris nudes, although it was for one study of a plaster cast (cat. 257). As already mentioned in the entry on the Antwerp figure studies (cats. 219-224), several of which are on this paper, it is a type that Van Gogh used a great deal and provides no strong arguments for dating a work. The background is similar to those in studies after plaster casts, such as cats. 264 and 267, so the drawing was made in Paris.

Another connection between the nudes and plaster casts, and between them and works which Toulouse-Lautrec made in the Cormon studio, is the paper that Van Gogh used for many of his drawings: a laid paper with the watermark MICHALLET. It is also the support of the academic works by Toulouse-Lautrec which are now in the Musée Toulouse-Lautrec in Albi. No fewer than 95 per cent of his numerous nude studies there are on this paper, as are a similar percentage of the studies from plaster casts.<sup>19</sup> This correspondence is all the more striking in that this watermark is otherwise extremely rare in Van Gogh's œuvre. As far as is known it is only found in two other works: a scene of a peasant reading by the fire which he made in Etten in 1881, and a study of a hand which probably dates from the Saint-Rémy period.<sup>20</sup> It looks as if the students could buy the paper from a shop near Cormon's studio or even from the teacher himself. The nude studies drawn on it are cats. 245 and 246, which are on two sides of the same sheet, *Standing female nude seen from the back* and *A woman's legs* (cats. 238, 239), which was torn in two, and the drawing of a seated woman (cat. 248). Three laid sheets have different watermarks. Cats. 242 and 243 were originally a single sheet with the watermarks AL and PL BAS, and a sheet with studies of feet (cat. 250) has the watermark Lalanne. These marks are also found in paper used by Toulouse-Lautrec.<sup>21</sup> Only one of Van Gogh's figure studies is on wove paper, a pale grey sheet from the Whatman factory.

Most of Van Gogh's studies are in black chalk. Only the small sketch

of the dark-haired young man (cat. 244) was done with the pen, while the drawings of the woman with pinned-up hair (cats. 248 and 249) are in pencil.

The works have different purposes. Although there is no hard-and-fast dividing line between a *dessin au trait* and a *dessin ombré*, in most cases it is possible to establish the primary object of the exercise. In some cases the emphasis is quite clearly on the correct rendering of the contours, while in others it is the shading (and hence the modelling) which was the subject of study. A few sheets show Van Gogh trying to strike a harmonious balance between the two.

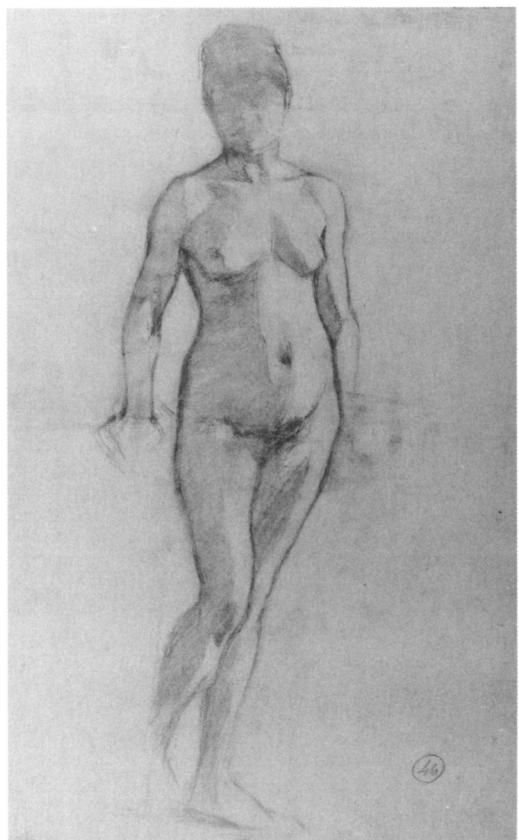
*Seated female nude* (cat. 248), which still has lines from the initial draft, is most notable for its contours; the shading is minimal, possibly because the sketch is unfinished. Van Gogh created the fall of light on the hair by leaving reserves. To the left of the woman are the outlines of the leg of a male nude or plaster cast. Several diagonal lines to the right of the head defy interpretation. The sketchily depicted stool on which the woman is sitting looks identical to the one in the male nude seen from the back (cat. 240). The seated woman may be the same model as in *Standing male and seated female nudes* (cat. 241), but she is depicted so sketchily there that it is impossible to say for certain.

The related pencil drawing, *Standing female nude seen from the back* (cat. 249), has both bold contours and reasonably detailed shading using hatching and stumping. There is an eye-catching hatched ground which lends the figure extra volume. Although Van Gogh devoted considerable care to the scene, and the angular draughtsmanship is certainly his, the sheet nevertheless makes a tentative impression, for the shadows appear to have been sketched in rapidly, even haphazardly. The connection of the left arm to the body is not very convincing, and the rendering of the left hip is equally unsatisfactory.

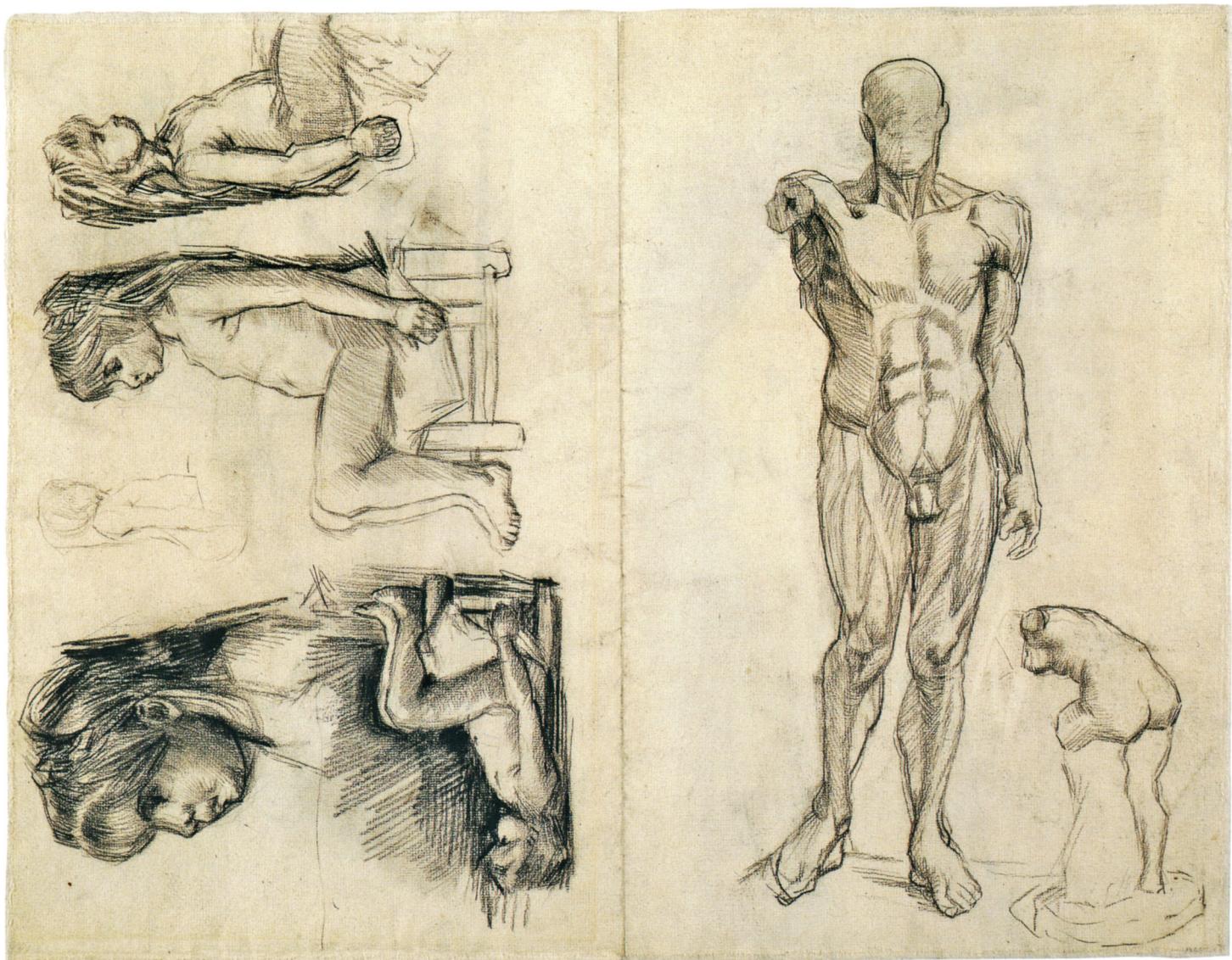
Rudimentary shading and an emphasis on the contours characterise two very similar variants of the *Standing male nude seen from the front* (cats. 242 and 243). The model for these two black chalk drawings was the athletic young man encountered above. In both sheets his left hand is raised a little as he points in the viewer's direction. Van Gogh captured the foreshortened arm and hand well. As in the previous sheet, the contours are decidedly angular, with Van Gogh groping for the outlines with straight lines. This is particularly noticeable in cat. 243, the lines of which are bolder. These drawings are far more assured. As mentioned above, they were originally part of the same sheet. The left side of cat. 242 fits the left side of cat. 243 when it is turned over, so it is possible that Van Gogh made the

the Saint-Rémy period, but it is not really possible to give it a firm date.

<sup>21</sup> See note 19.



238<sup>h</sup> Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec,  
*Standing female nude seen from the front*,  
c. 1886. Albi, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec.



246 Studies of a seated girl, L'Ecorché and Venus



247 Seated girl seen from the front

drawings on a sheet folded double which was later torn in two. Cat. 243 fell prey to a studio prank when he or a fellow student added a delicately drawn erect penis.

The modelling in *Standing female nude seen from the back* and the associated *A woman's legs* is very fine (cat. 238 and 239). Van Gogh tore the drawing in two, so he was evidently not very satisfied with this study, which was drawn on a full sheet of paper. It is nevertheless the most successful of his nudes, with the chiaroscuro effect carefully executed with a combination of hatching and stumping. The highlights in the right arm and hip are also very convincing. Van Gogh was probably dissatisfied with the face, which has a disturbing double contour. The woman was drawn using a black chalk with a characteristic brown tinge which was used in a number of the Paris works and is often mistaken for charcoal. Along the lower edge, to the left of the legs, is an oil stain which was made after the sheet had been torn in two, for the portion with the legs and feet is clean. The latter sheet later had a strip some 5 cm across removed in order to centre the scene on the other side (see cat. 267).

The *Seated male nude seen from the back* (cat. 240) is equally successful in its shading but less so in the detailing of the head, which was extended at the back. The figure takes up a full sheet of paper, and Van Gogh set to work in the same way as in the previous sheet, with hatching and stumping. The initial draft was probably made with black chalk and was not easy

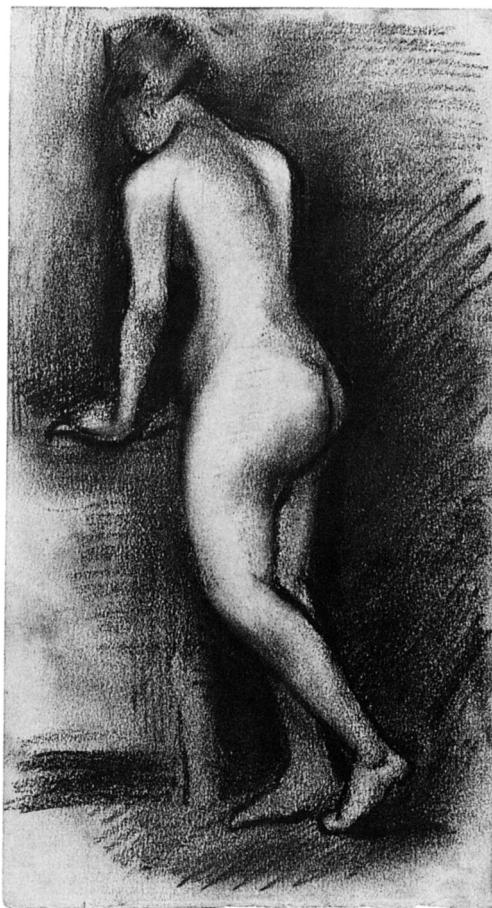


238i Reverse of cat. 244.

to remove. The perspective of the stool is assured, although the seat does look a little odd. The man is probably sitting on a piece of cloth, part of which is hanging down. A painting by Toulouse-Lautrec may be of the same man.<sup>22</sup>

Contour and shading are carefully balanced in the drawings of the child in the full sheet drawn on both sides with *Seated girl and Venus* (cat. 245) and *Studies of a seated girl, L'Ecorché and Venus* (cat. 246). Neither the contour nor the shading has the ascendancy, and the little girl is captured superbly, partly due to the care with which Van Gogh detailed her face. In cat. 245 she is posing stiffly, seated on a low stool draped with a cloth and with her back flat against the wall. This study takes up half of the sheet, the other half being filled with a study of a

<sup>22</sup> The identification was made in Heenk 1995, p. 144. The work in question (Dortu 1971 P. 184) is in a private collection, and shows a nude man polishing marble (see exhib. cat. Toulouse-Lautrec, Paris (Grand Palais) 1992, cat. 21).



238i Sketchbook sheet with a nude study, October 1886-January 1887. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



238k Sketchbook sheet with a nude study, October 1886-January 1887. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



248 Seated female nude



249 Standing female nude seen from the back

23 As noted in Heenk 1995, p. 139. She relates it to a remark made by Van Gogh in letter 562/451, see cat. 218.

24 Dortu 1971, D 2.578, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec. The woman in Van Gogh's study is insufficiently detailed for identification. The man in Toulouse-Lautrec's work is the same as the model in the drawing by Bernard reproduced here (fig. 238a). He is clearly balding, and is older than Van Gogh's male model.



238<sup>b</sup> Sketchbook sheet with a nude study, October 1886-January 1887. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

plaster cast of Venus, which is upside down relative to the girl. As with cat. 249, Van Gogh sketched in a dark background behind the statue to give the figure more volume. Beside it is the small figure of a boxer in a pose based on the statue's.<sup>23</sup> Van Gogh made a similar "translation" of a pose with *The discus thrower* (cat. 218).

The other side of the sheet has drawings of the little girl on one half and studies after plaster casts on the other (cat. 246). The girl, who is again seated on a stool with her back pressed against the wall, is seen in four studies ranging from a roughly sketched side view to a detailed portrayal of her face. As in the previous sheet, her hair is partly plaited. The other half of the sheet shows *L'Ecorché*, the only time in all the studies that it is seen from the front. It stands to reason that the emphasis here is on the shading and hatching, for plaster casts of this kind were intended to teach pupils how to depict the musculature of the human body. Here it is depicted quite faithfully compared to the other studies. The torso has been given volume with short parallel hatching, but the feet and head are indicated only cursorily. To the right of the figure is a small, sketchy study of the *Venus* that features on the verso (cat. 245).

The little girl reappears in the *Seated girl seen from the front* (cat. 247), this time far more sketchily than in most of the other studies. Van Gogh once again added a background to give the scene dimension. Lines only incompletely erased by the left leg show that it was originally placed a little further to the right (from the viewer's standpoint).

Van Gogh also endeavoured to impart a sense of depth to the *Standing male and seated female nudes* (cat. 241). This is not so much an exercise in modelling as in achieving a spatial effect by differentiating the chiaroscuro in the figures and the background. Van Gogh tried to add nuances to that background by scratching in it with a sharp implement, by stumping, and by working the chalk with a moist brush. The chalk has a brown tinge, as it does in cats. 238 and 239. The paper was folded over on the left, centring the scene. There is a very faint sketch on that left portion, possibly a head with a hat. The posing couple have been wrongly identified as the man and woman in a work by Toulouse-Lautrec.<sup>24</sup>

*Feet* (cat. 250) is a straightforward academic study, although it is impossible to make out whether the feet are of flesh and blood or plaster. The contours are bold, but this is primarily a study of shadows, which are worked up with hatching and stumping. Van Gogh used a slightly greasier and more intense black chalk for the shading than for the contours. He scraped some of the material off the leg on the left. The sheet has three large and several smaller oil stains with small traces of green and red pigment.

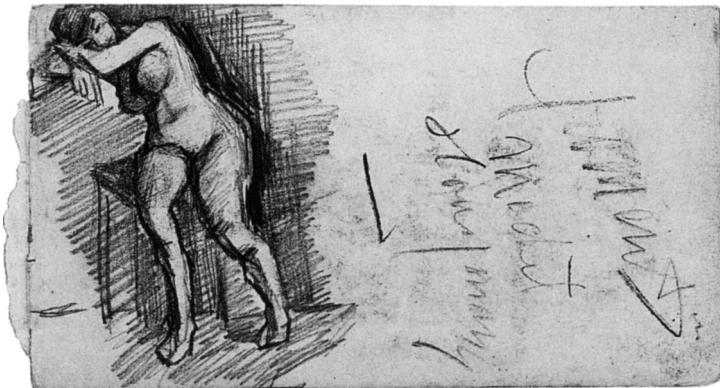


250 Feet

25 See *Van der Wolk* 1987, pp. 142-47.

The pen drawing (cat. 244), which comes from a sketchbook and was made over a pencil study of a man digging, is no more than a hasty sketch, possibly an exercise in the chiaroscuro of the background and the model. Van Gogh used two pens of differing thickness, and a brush for the right and bottom framing lines. The back of the sheet has 14 meticulous little drawings of heads which are not by Van Gogh (fig. 238i). Nor is the inscription along the left edge: 'Junio 12 188[?]', the final digit being illegible. This is one of three sheets (cat. 286 is another) which were once part of a sketchbook which is now lost.<sup>25</sup>

One surviving sketchbook which Van Gogh filled in Paris contains four sketches, three of them very hasty, of nude models which he must have studied at Cormon's (figs. 238j-m).



238m Sketchbook sheet with a nude study, October 1886-January 1887.  
Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

**238 Standing female nude seen from the back**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Black chalk with a brown tinge on laid paper  
35.2 x 47.3 cm  
Watermark: MICHALLET  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 254

Inv. d 160 V/1962  
SD 17101 JH 1036

**PROVENANCE**

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**

De la Faille 1970, pp. 582, 672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 441, no. 2.442; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 457, vol. 2, pl. CCLII; Heenk 1995, p. 145; Hulsker 1996, pp. 226, 227.

**EXHIBITIONS**

1954-55 Bern, no. 123 (as F 1368b); 1955 Antwerp, no. 216.

**239 A woman's legs**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Black chalk with a brown tinge on laid paper  
19.8 x 38.3 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 267

Inv. d 36 V/1962  
F 1363fv JH 1036

**PROVENANCE**

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent

loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**

De la Faille 1970, pp. 478, 479, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 441, no. 2.443; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 352, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXII; Heenk 1995, p. 145; Hulsker 1996, pp. 226, 227.

**EXHIBITIONS**

None.

**240 Seated male nude seen from the back**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Black chalk on laid paper  
61.7 x 48.2 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 259

Inv. d 169 V/1962  
SD 1701v JH 1085

**PROVENANCE**

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**

De la Faille 1970, pp. 580, 672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 436, no. 2.411; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 454, vol. 2, pl. CCI; Heenk 1995, pp. 143-45; Hulsker 1996, pp. 234, 235.

**EXHIBITION**

1971-72 Paris, no. 153.

**241 Standing male and seated female nudes**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Black chalk on laid paper  
31.4 x 47.5 cm  
Watermark: MICHALLET  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 265

Inv. d 31 V/1962  
F 1363ar JH 1014

**PROVENANCE**

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**

De la Faille 1970, pp. 475, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 430, no. 2.376; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 351, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXI; Heenk 1995, pp. 145, 270; Hulsker 1996, pp. 218, 219.

**EXHIBITIONS**

1962 London, no. 30; 1987-88 Enschede, no. 57.

**242 Standing male nude seen from the front**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Black chalk on laid paper  
47.3 x 31.0 cm  
Watermark: PL BAS  
Unsigned

Inv. d 45 V/1962  
F 1364-1 JH 1007

**PROVENANCE**

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 118, as F 1364, vol. 4, as F 1364, pl. CXXXIV; De la Faille 1970, pp. 476, 479, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 430, no. 2.377; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 118, as 1364, 353, vol. 2, pl. CXXXIV; Heenk 1995,

pp. 145, 270; Hulsker 1996,  
pp. 218, 219.

EXHIBITION  
1955 Antwerp, no. 214.

**243 Standing male nude seen from the front**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Black chalk on laid paper  
47.7 x 30.8 cm  
Watermark: AL in a scroll  
Unsigned

Inv. d 59 V/1962  
F 1364-2 JH 1008

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 118, as F 1364, vol. 4, as 1364, pl. cxxxiv; De la Faille 1970, pp. 476, 479, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 430, no. 2.378; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 118, as 1364, 353, vol. 2, pl. cxxxiv; Heenk 1995, pp. 145, 270; Hulsker 1996, pp. 218, 219.

EXHIBITIONS  
None.

**244 Standing male nude seen from the front**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Pencil, pen and brush in dark brown ink, on wove paper  
21.6 x 13.1 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 30 V/1962  
F 1362r JH 1009

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation (ratified in 1982); 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 117, vol. 4, pl. cxxxiv; De la Faille 1970, pp. 475, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 430, no. 2.375; Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 142, 146; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 117, 350, 351, vol. 2, pl. cxxxiv; Heenk 1995, pp. 145, 270; Hulsker 1996, pp. 218, 219.

EXHIBITION  
1962 London, no. 29.

**245 Seated girl and Venus**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Black chalk on laid paper  
47.5 x 62.0 cm  
Watermark: MICHALLET  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 245

Inv. d 12 V/1962  
F 1366r JH 1039

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 118, vol. 4, pl. cxxxiv, as F 1363, cxxxv; De la Faille 1970, pp. 483, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 436, no. 2.415; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 118, 355, vol. 2, pls. cxxxv, cxxxvi; Heenk 1995, pp. 141, 142, 144, 146; Hulsker 1996, pp. 226, 227, 230.

EXHIBITIONS

1953 Zürich, no. 58; 1953-54 Saint Louis, Philadelphia & Toledo, no. 58; 1954-55 Bern, no. 121; 1955 Antwerp, no. 212; 1956 Haarlem, no. 46.

**246 Studies of a seated girl, L'Ecorché and Venus**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Black chalk on laid paper  
47.5 x 62.0 cm  
Watermark: MICHALLET  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 245

Inv. d 12 V/1962  
F 1366r JH 1039

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 118, vol. 4, pls. cxxxv, cxxxvi, as F 1366 verso; De la Faille 1970, pp. 480, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 436, no. 2.414; Paris 1988, pp. 68, 69, no. 15; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 118, 355, vol. 2, pls. cxxxv, cxxxvi; Heenk 1995, pp. 141, 142, 144, 146; Hulsker 1996, pp. 226, 227, 230.

EXHIBITIONS

1947-48 London, Birmingham & Glasgow, no. 130; 1948 Bergen & Oslo, no. 79 and no. 80, respectively; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 228; 1953 The Hague, no. 51; 1953 Otterlo & Amsterdam, no. 89; 1988 Paris, no. 15.  
1947-48 London, Birmingham & Glasgow, no. 130; 1948 Bergen & Oslo, no. 79 and no. 80, respectively; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 228; 1953 The Hague, no. 51; 1953 Otterlo & Amsterdam, no. 89; 1988 Paris, no. 15.  
1964 Zundert, no. 16; 1966 Paris & Albi, no. 29; 1967 Lille & Zürich, no. 31; 1967-68 Dallas, Philadelphia, Toledo & Ottawa, no. 28; 1968 Liège, no. 28; 1968-69 London, no. 61; 1971-72 Paris, no. 145; 1975 Malmö, no. 50; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 50; 1977 Paris, unnumbered.

**247 Seated girl seen from the front**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Black chalk on laid paper  
30.5 x 23.6 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 430 V/1962  
F 1367 JH 1043

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1931-62 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 118, vol. 4, pl. cxxxvi; London 1968, pp. 58, 59, no. 61; Tralbaut 1969, p. 200; De la Faille 1970, pp. 483, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 437, no. 2.416; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 118, 355, vol. 2, pl. cxxxvi; Heenk 1995, p. 146; Hulsker 1996, pp. 228, 230.

EXHIBITIONS

1905 Amsterdam 1, no. 348  
[Dfl. 150]; 1914-15 Amsterdam, no. 139; 1920 New York, no. 17 [\$800]; 1931 Amsterdam, no. 170; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 229; 1954-55 Bern, no. 122; 1955 Antwerp, no. 213; 1956 Haarlem, no. 47; 1957-58 Leiden & Schiedam, no. 61; 1958 Mons, no. 62; 1964 Zundert, no. 16; 1966 Paris & Albi, no. 29; 1967 Lille & Zürich, no. 31; 1967-68 Dallas, Philadelphia, Toledo & Ottawa, no. 28; 1968 Liège, no. 28; 1968-69 London, no. 61; 1971-72 Paris, no. 145; 1975 Malmö, no. 50; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 50; 1977 Paris, unnumbered.

**248 Seated female nude**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Pencil on laid paper

47.6 x 31.6 cm

Watermark: MICHALLET

Unsigned

Inv. d 21 V/1962

SD 1700 JH 1010

**PROVENANCE**

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62

V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent

van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73

on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,

Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent

loan to the Van Gogh Museum,

Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**

De la Faille 1970, pp. 580, 672;

Amsterdam 1987, p. 431,

no. 2.382; De la Faille 1992,

vol. 1, p. 454, vol. 2, pl. CCL;

Heenk 1995, pp. 145, 270;

Hulsker 1996, pp. 218, 219.

**EXHIBITION**

1955 Antwerp, no. 217.

**249 Standing female nude seen from the back**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Pencil on wove paper

50.9 x 39.5 cm

Watermark: J WHATMAN 1884

Unsigned

Inv. d 23 V/1962

SD 1698 JH 1012

**PROVENANCE**

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62

V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent

van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73

on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,

Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent

loan to the Van Gogh Museum,

Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**

De la Faille 1970, pp. 580, 672;

Amsterdam 1987, p. 431,

no. 2.380; Otterlo 1990, p. 179;

De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 454,

vol. 2, pl. CCL; Heenk 1995,

pp. 138, 145, 270; Hulsker 1996,

pp. 218, 219.

**EXHIBITIONS**

None.

**250 Feet**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Black chalk on laid paper

32.1 x 46.3 cm

Watermark: Lalanne

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 275

Inv. d 156 V/1962

SD 1703r JH 1083

**PROVENANCE**

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62

V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent

van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73

on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,

Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent

loan to the Van Gogh Museum,

Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**

De la Faille 1970, pp. 581, 672;

Amsterdam 1987, p. 437,

no. 2.417; De la Faille 1992,

vol. 1, p. 455, vol. 2, pl. CCII;

Heenk 1995, p. 146; Hulsker

1996, pp. 232, 234, 235.

**EXHIBITIONS**

None.

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## 251-271 Studies of plaster casts in Cormon's studio

Dating Van Gogh's studies of plaster casts has always been a tricky business, for he made them not only at the academy in Antwerp and Cormon's studio in Paris, but also at home in the rue Lepic.<sup>1</sup> There was no essential difference between Cormon's method of instruction and the way drawing was taught at the Antwerp academy, so one would not really expect to find any glaring differences in technique between the drawings made in either place. Equally, there is no noticeable stylistic development in the cast studies that have here been placed in the Paris period, which is not at all surprising with exercises of this kind, in which personal style was not of the essence. One would only expect to find a freer, brisker approach in the studies which Van Gogh made at home.<sup>2</sup>

There are three sources of information which can help identify the

cast studies that were made at Cormon's: a photograph of the studio with a number of plaster casts in the background; the œuvre of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, who worked in the studio at the same time as Van Gogh and drew the same casts; and the combination on single sheets of studies by Van Gogh after both casts and nude models.

The group photograph in Cormon's studio was taken around 1885.

On a shelf on the wall on the right are various plaster casts (fig. 251a), three of which were drawn by Van Gogh. The one on the left is a *Venus on one leg* (see cats. 245, 246, 251, 254, 257, 267, 271), beside it is a *Torso of Venus* supported by a pedestal beneath the left thigh (see cats. 252, 258, 260, 261, 264-266), and on the far right, behind the large statue, is a *Bust of a young warrior* after the original by Antonio del Pollaiuolo (1432-1498; see cat. 238). Studies of all three are also found in Toulouse-Lautrec's œuvre.<sup>3</sup> Yet another argument for dating Van Gogh's *Bust of a young warrior* to the time when both artists were working in Cormon's studio is that on the back of his drawing there is a male nude who may also be the subject of a painting by Toulouse-Lautrec.<sup>4</sup> Six plaster casts depicted in 11 drawings by Van Gogh do not feature in Toulouse-Lautrec's studies, so he must have made them in 1887 after leaving Cormon's studio (cats. 276-286).

Another four sculptures can be added to the first three, for they appear on the same sheets as studies of nudes or casts known to have

<sup>1</sup> For the plaster casts which Van Gogh had at home see cats. 276-286.

<sup>2</sup> In the past it was generally assumed that all the studies of plaster casts were drawn in Cormon's studio. Only Heenk 1995 differentiated between the three possible locations, taking the same line of reasoning as we follow here. Van der Wolk in Otterlo 1990, p. 179, wrongly dates cat. 257 to the Antwerp period on the evidence of the paper (see note 33 below). The later dating of the studies which Van Gogh made at home is not based on stylistic considerations alone. The combination of different subjects on a single sheet was also taken into account, as was the existence of brightly coloured paintings of four of those casts. That group of 11 drawings is discussed in cats. 276-286.

<sup>3</sup> In drawings Dortu 1971, D. 2.603, D. 2.605, D. 2.611, and in a single painting, P. 216.

<sup>4</sup> See cat. 240.

<sup>5</sup> See also cats. 238-250.

been made at Cormon's.<sup>5</sup> The famous *Ecorché* by Jean-Antoine Houdon (1741-1828) is on a sheet with drawings of a seated girl and a Venus (cats. 245, 246). The same flayed figure displaying the musculature is depicted on another sheet along with a sketch of the *Borghese gladiator* without the arms (cat. 270). One of the drawings of the *Torso of Venus* has a faint sketch of the *Venus de Milo* on the back (cat. 256). Finally, there is a full-length male figure combined with sketches of Venus (cat. 254).

All seven pieces of sculpture were popular aids for teaching the principles of drawing. Houdon's *L'Ecorché* (Flayed man) became famous immediately after its completion in 1767, and casts of it were soon in academies throughout Europe and the United States (fig. 251b).<sup>6</sup> Flayed figures of this kind enable artists to study the volumes and forms of the human body. Some showed the figure in action (see cat. 285), while others, like Houdon's, are at rest. The *Borghese gladiator* was admired chiefly for its anatomical realism (fig. 251c).<sup>7</sup> Pollaiuolo's *Bust of a young warrior* was another popular subject of study, and the academy in Antwerp also had a cast of it (fig. 251d).<sup>8</sup>

The full-length male figure found in six of the drawings has always been taken for a study of the live model. However, the similarities in the

6 Houdon made his *L'Ecorché*, a sculpture of a flayed man, in preparation for his statue of John the Baptist for Sta Maria degli Angeli in Rome. On Houdon see H.H. Arnason, *The sculptures of Houdon*, London 1975, pp. 13-15.

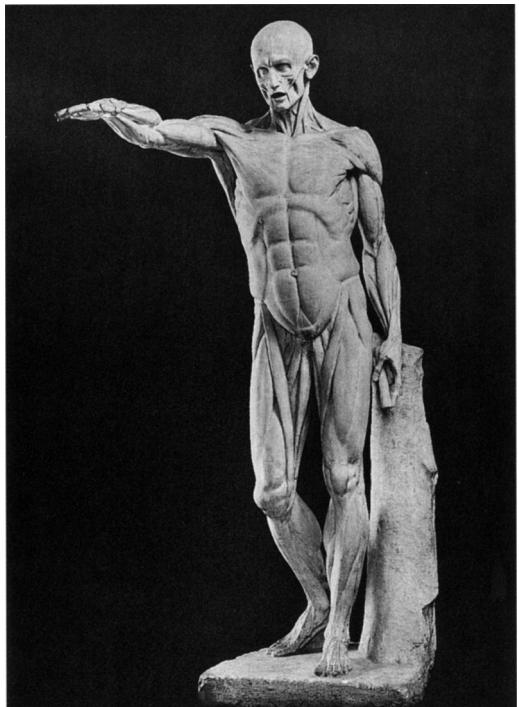
7 The marble original dating from around 100 BC is in the Louvre. Its fame spread immediately after its excavation in 1611, and casts were made of it. It is possible that the one in Cormon's studio lacked the arms. See Haskell/Penny 1981, pp. 221-24.

8 The original terracotta, which was executed around 1470, is now in the Bargello in Florence. Various mythological figures and an emperor's head in profile are depicted on the young man's breastplate. L.D. Ettlinger, in his *Antonio and Piero Pollaiuolo*. Complete edition with a critical catalogue, Oxford 1978, cat. no. 22, regards the form of the bust (lacking the arms), and the type of breastplate and its decoration as unusual. Van Gogh clearly did not make this drawing in Antwerp, for there is a nude study on the back.



251a Photograph of Fernand Cormon's studio.

c. 1885. Albi, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec.



251b Jean-Antoine Houdon, *L'Ecorché*,

1767. Rome, Académie de France.

<sup>9</sup> The original probably dates from the 1st century BC and was excavated in 1530. It is now in the Museo Archeologico in Florence. See Haskell/Penny 1981, pp. 240-41.

<sup>10</sup> See cat. 218. On the Venus de Milo see Haskell/Penny 1981, pp. 328-30.

<sup>11</sup> The original, equally mutilated sculpture, was in the Arenberg Collection in Brussels in the 19th century. Its present whereabouts are not known.

<sup>12</sup> This identification is from Heenk 1995, p. 148. The right arm, which is missing in the cast, and the lower legs were added when the sculpture was restored.

<sup>13</sup> See cats. 276-286.

pose and position of the hands, and above all the missing little finger on the right hand in cat. 262, strongly suggested that these were drawings of a plaster cast, and so they proved to be. They are after a cast of the classical bronze statue known as the *Idol*, which was held up as a model of elegance and good proportions (fig. 251e).<sup>9</sup>

The best known of the three casts of Venus in Cormon's studio is the *Venus de Milo*. The original was installed in the Louvre one year after its excavation in 1820 (fig. 251f), and it too rapidly spawned numerous casts. It is possible that Van Gogh studied one of them in Antwerp.<sup>10</sup> The traditional name of the second type of Venus, the *Venus on one leg* on the left in the photograph of Cormon's studio, is *Venus binding her sandal*. It is not known whether that was what she was actually doing in the complete statue, so it is referred to here simply as *Venus* (fig. 251g).<sup>11</sup> The third is a cast of a marble *Torso of Venus* in the British Museum, London (fig. 251h).<sup>12</sup> Van Gogh himself owned a cast of this sculpture, but it was dissimilar in that it was mounted on a broad base in a different position.<sup>13</sup>



251c *Borghese gladiator*, c. 100 BC. Paris, Musée du Louvre.



251d Antonio del Pollaiuolo, *Bust of a young warrior*, 1470. Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello.

Students trained by first drawing a cast in order to get the contours right before progressing to the correct rendering of the volumes by means of light and shaded passages (see cats. 238-250). The dark passages were created by hatching or stumping. Van Gogh went to great lengths to master these skills, as is clear not only from his drawings but also from a description of him at work by Emile Bernard, who observed him drawing a cast in Cormon's studio one afternoon in the autumn of 1886:<sup>14</sup> 'Seated before a plaster cast of a classical sculpture, he copies the beautiful forms with the patience of a saint. He wants to seize hold of those contours, those masses, those reliefs. He corrects himself, passionately starts afresh, erases, until finally he wears a hole in the paper with the vigorous rubbing of his eraser.'<sup>15</sup>

In many cases it is possible to establish the specific purpose of Van Gogh's studies of casts, the chubbiness of those of Venus making them look more like real women than a classical goddess. It therefore makes more sense to describe these drawings by type of study rather than by type of sculpture. The following should in no way be interpreted as suggesting a chronological sequence.

In only five of the 21 surviving studies did Van Gogh concentrate specifically on the contours.<sup>16</sup> The volumes are roughly suggested with hatchings which are not elaborated. *Venus* (cat. 251), a pencil study, does not look entirely finished, for the support under the left leg is missing, and the right foot is merely sketched in. The erased but still visible first draft of the *Torso of Venus* (cat. 252) reveals how Van Gogh wrestled with the contours, particularly in the lower half. Once he had found the correct lines he reinforced them with the black chalk used for the rest of the drawing. Despite the cursory attention paid to the volumes, the detailing of the pedestal and the shadow to the right of it do give the sheet a finished air. Here, as in cat. 264, Van Gogh had difficulty connecting the two sections of the rear upper leg. The lower part is too straight, making it look as if it is part of the pedestal. There is blue chalk beside the thighs on the left which was probably transferred from a drawing on which this sheet was lying when Van Gogh drew the cast study on the back (cat. 260), for the blue follows the line of the protruding thigh in that drawing.

The three other studies in which the emphasis is more on the contours than the volumes are of the standing male nude. The first (cat. 253) was laid down with charcoal and worked up with a fairly soft, dark black chalk. The right shoulder and upper arm, in particular, show Van Gogh struggling to capture the contours. The sheet was originally attached on the left to the sheet with cats. 255 and 262, which depict the same cast

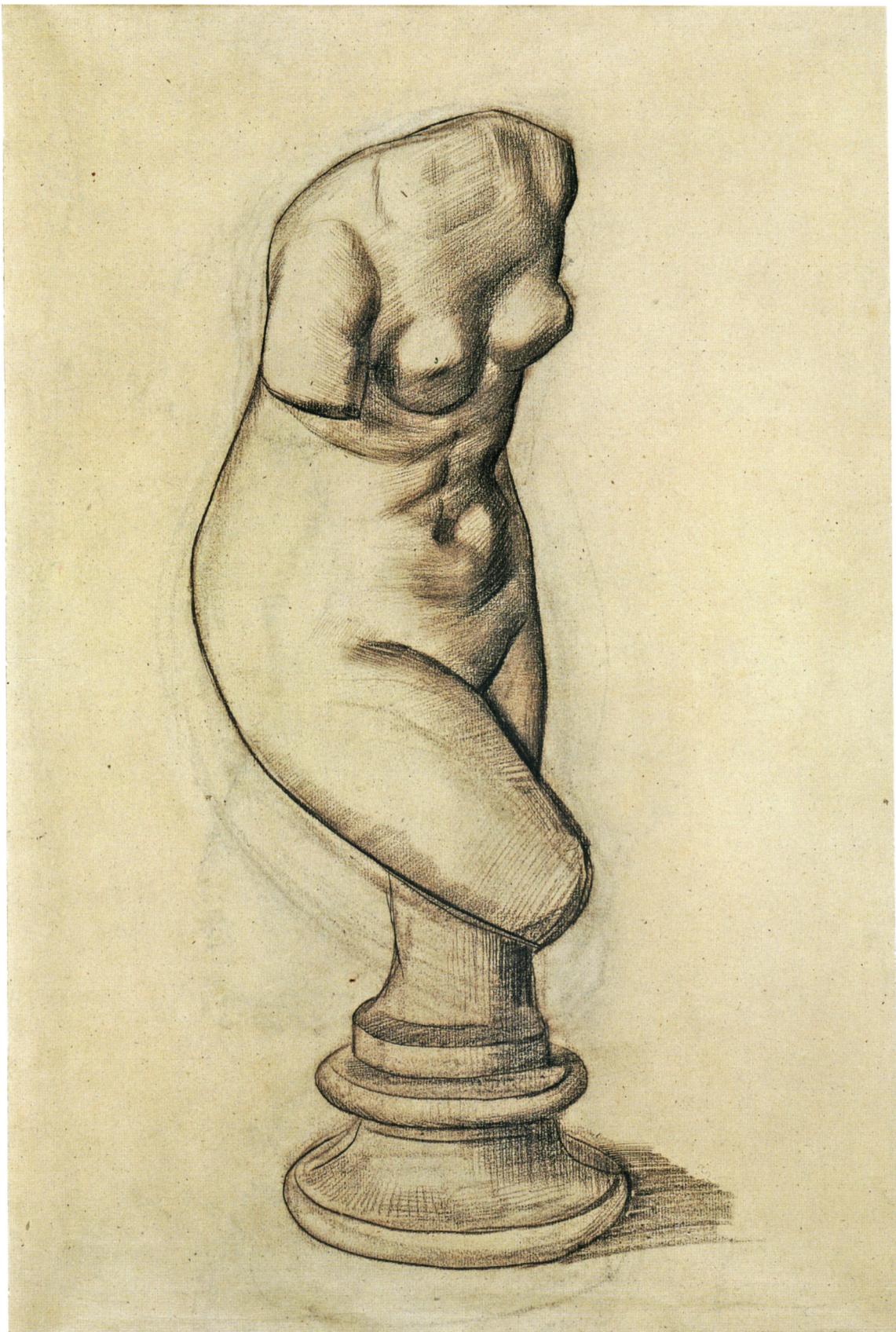
<sup>14</sup> *Bernard* 1952, p. 14. There were no other pupils in the studio at the time, for they usually worked in the mornings only (see also letter 559/448).

<sup>15</sup> *Vollard* 1911, pp. 10, 11: 'Assis devant une antique en plâtre, il copie les belles formes avec une patience angélique. Il veut s'emparer de ces contours, de ces masses, de ces reliefs. Il se corrige, recommence avec passion, efface, et finalement trouve sa feuille de papier à force de la frotter avec une gomme'.

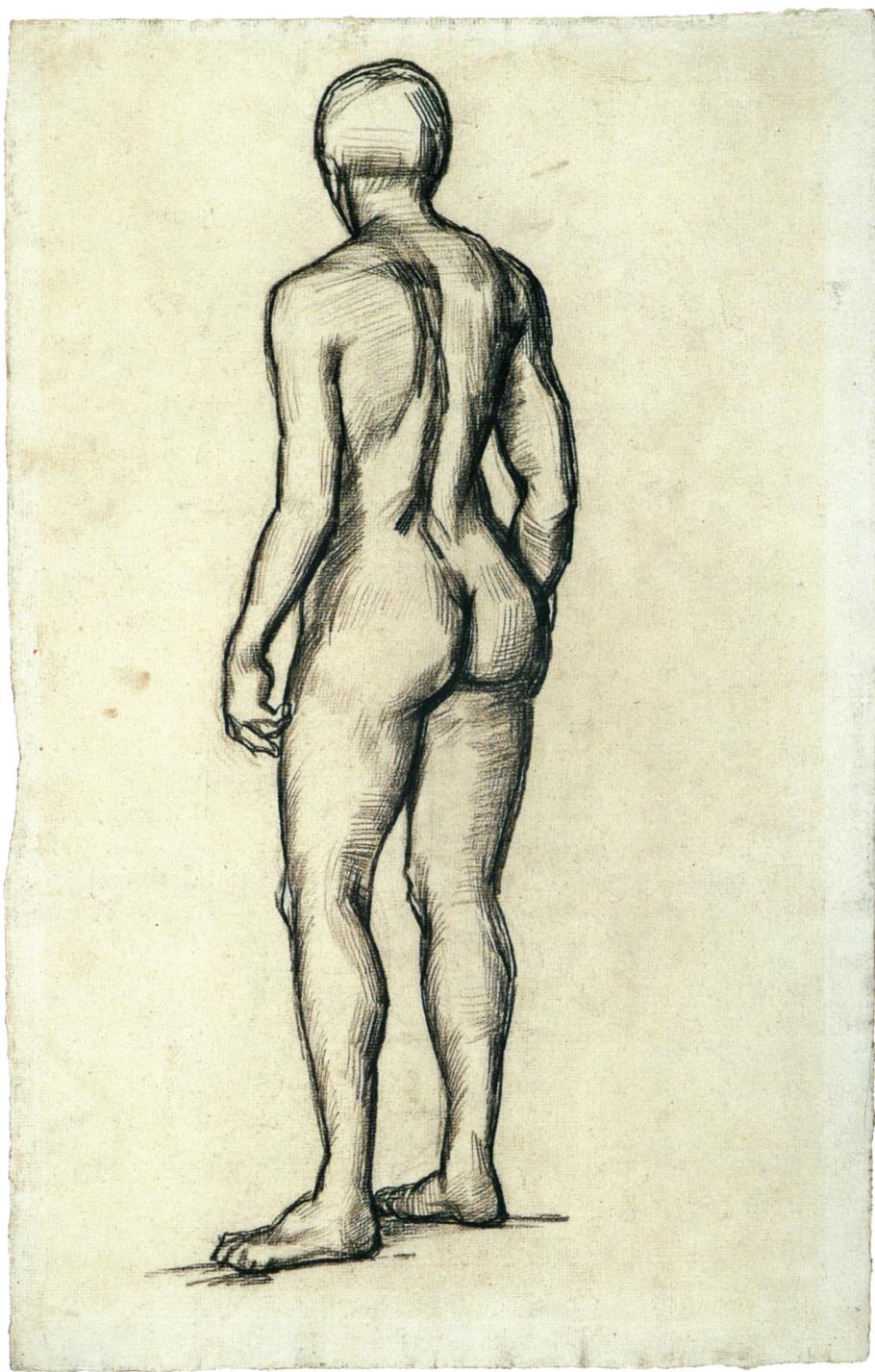
<sup>16</sup> A fifth contour study, a small sketch of Venus, is on cat. 246, and is described there.



251 Venus



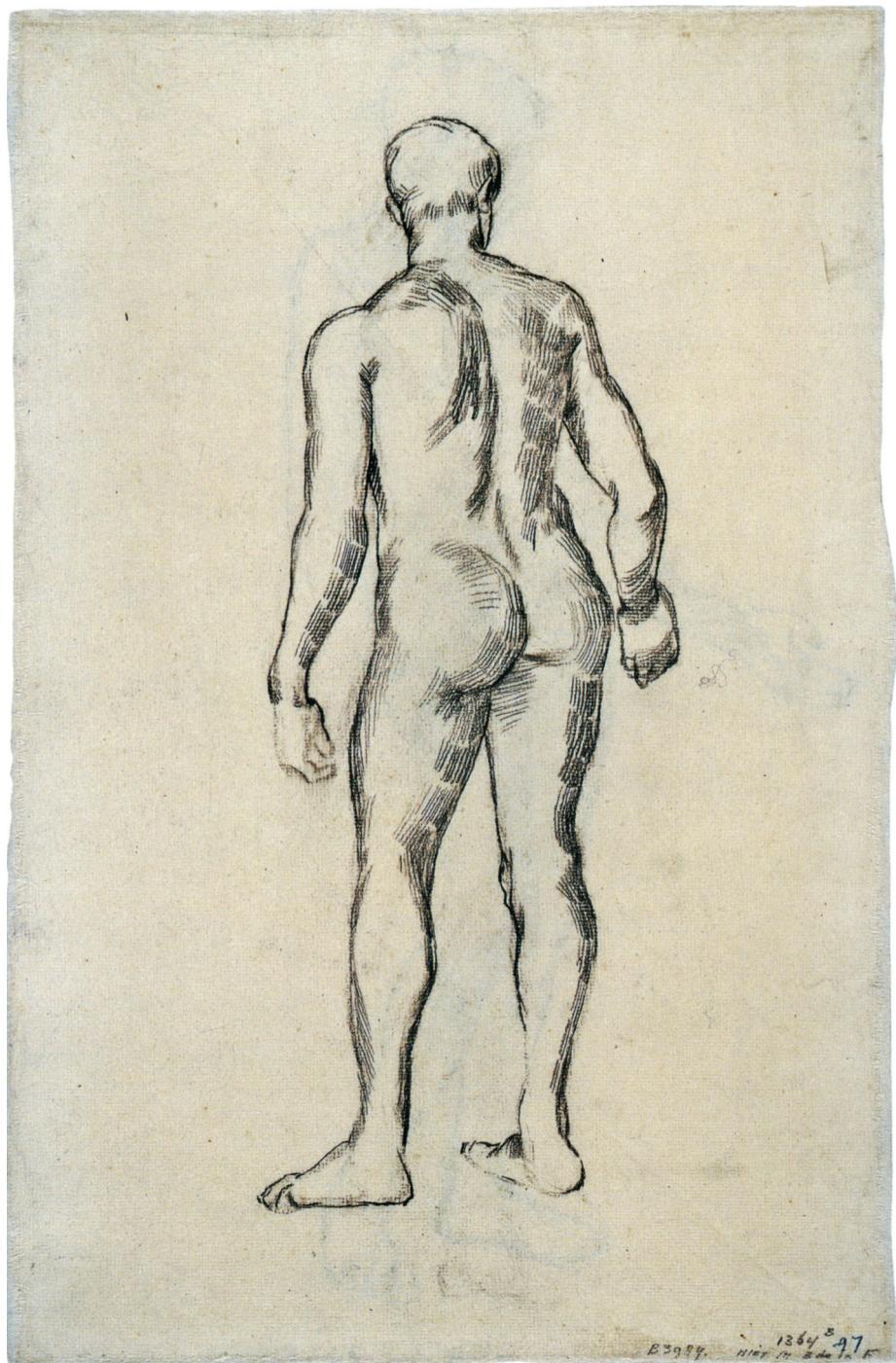
252 Torso of Venus



253 Idol



254 Idol and sketches of Venus



255 Idol



256 Venus de Milo

<sup>17</sup> This sort of hatching is also found in cats. 253 and 268.

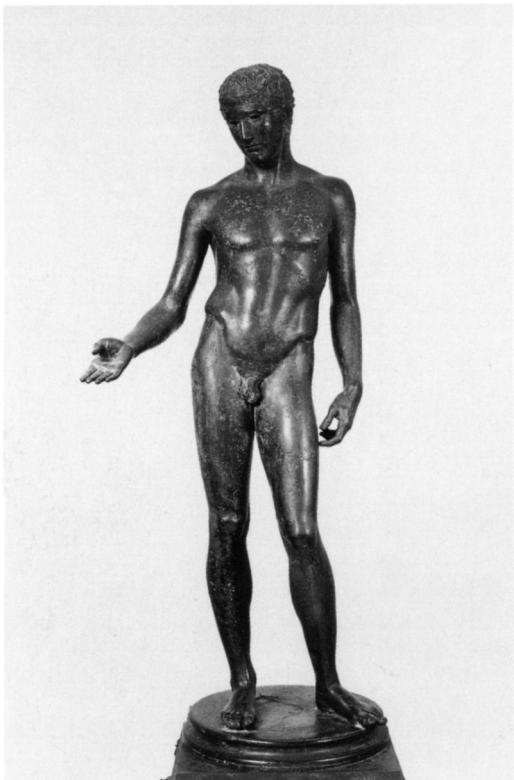
<sup>18</sup> On Van Gogh and Cassagne see the Introduction in *Drawings I*, pp. 18-21.

<sup>19</sup> See cats. 238-250 for the removal of drawing materials.

rotated through 90 degrees. The sheet with the *Idol* combined with three sketches of *Venus* is entirely in black chalk (cat. 254). The shadows in the male figure are a little more worked up than in the previous sheet, but were clearly not Van Gogh's main concern. He fooled around with the two studies at top right, as he did with the *Venus in a top hat* (cat. 267) that was originally part of this sheet, by adding a delicately drawn leg to the left stump in the smaller sketch of the two, and a leg, an arm and a head in the other one. The sheet was only torn in two after the completion of these figures, for the female nude on the back was torn through the middle, and the foot of the added leg on the right can be seen in *Venus in a top hat* (fig. 251i). The figure in cat. 255 is viewed from almost the same angle in cat. 254. The hatching, though, is very different. Van Gogh usually placed the hatching lines in his cast studies at right angles to the contours, but here they all run in the same direction, which is mainly vertical.<sup>17</sup> The figure was laid down with charcoal, the lines of which are clearly visible in the left hand because Van Gogh did not go over them with black chalk. The two drawing materials and the difference in colour between them can be seen within the contours of the buttocks and the feet.

Although *Venus de Milo* (cat. 256) consists solely of outlines, it does not belong in the category of cast studies conceived from the contours, for it is nothing more than a sketchy first draft. The contours are made up of short lines in black chalk which give the figure a rather angular look. The figure is also framed. Similar framing lines are found in a *Torso of Venus* (cat. 260), and may indicate that Van Gogh was following a method recommended by Armand Cassagne in his *Guide de l'alphabet du dessin* of 1880 as an aid for rendering proportions and perspectival distortion correctly.<sup>18</sup> It is striking, though, that there are none of the horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines which Cassagne placed within that frame. Perhaps Van Gogh felt that he was now experienced enough to dispense with them and make do with a simple box frame.

Twelve studies of plaster casts focus on the modelling of volumes. In the following descriptions a subdivision is made according to the style of the works, starting with those drawn with academic precision and concluding with the one that display Van Gogh's characteristic vigorous handling of line. The most worked up *dessin ombré* is *Venus* (cat. 257), which shows the cast from the back. Van Gogh began by drawing a light contour line which he later erased so thoroughly that it is now impossible to identify the material. However, the fact that it was eliminated almost entirely suggests that it was charcoal (all that remains are very faint vestiges to the



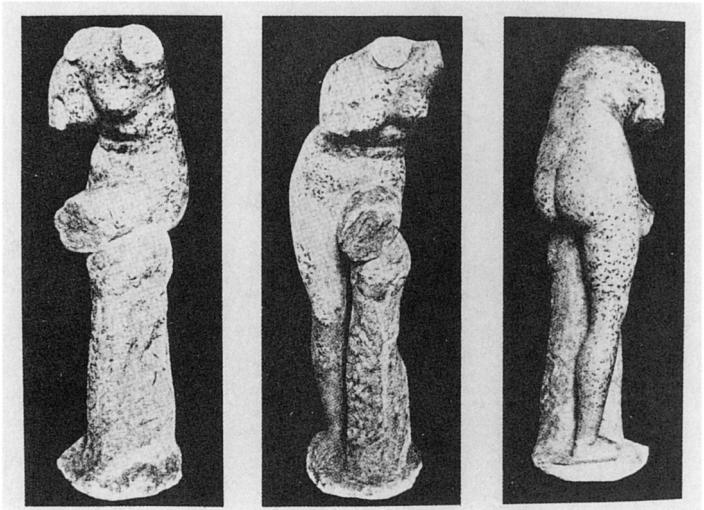
251e *Idol*, 1st century BC. Florence, Museo Archeologico.

right of the leg and to the left of the waist).<sup>19</sup> He then modelled the body meticulously, achieving smooth transitions between the various tones by hatching delicately with black chalk and stumping the lines to soften them. Once he had finished the modelling he drew the contour with a flowing line. The support and the base were drawn more swiftly and sketchily than the figure.

The *Torso of Venus* seen obliquely from the front (cat. 258) is also highly worked up. The first draft was in charcoal, which Van Gogh later rubbed out. Traces of those lines are still visible at various places alongside the present contour lines. The drawing itself was made with a soft pencil, the side of which was regularly employed to produce broad, velvety lines. Van Gogh probably found the shading in the hips on the left a little too dark, for he used an eraser to lighten it. The contours are thick and shiny, and were the last lines to be drawn. The only part of the scene that does not work is once again the left leg, which broadens at the bottom and seems to be part of the pedestal.



251f *Venus de Milo*, 2nd-3rd century BC.  
Paris, Musée du Louvre.



251g *Venus*, 1st-2nd century BC. Whereabouts  
unknown (former collection Arenberg,  
Brussel). From: Brinkerhoff 1978.

20 Only one of the 34 studies which Van Gogh made at Cormon's, cat. 263, has a small assisting line, which is insufficient evidence that he used this method. This is in marked contrast to the works that Toulouse-Lautrec made there, many of which have several assisting lines (see cats. 238-250).

Around the *Bust of a young warrior* (cat. 259) are traces of the first charcoal draft. The drawing itself was done with a black chalk with a brownish tinge. In this sheet Van Gogh concentrated first and foremost on the detailing of the face and the hair. He hatched the shadows in the latter passage and lightened certain parts by rubbing the chalk off. The subtle modelling of the face was achieved by stumping. The chest, with its long hatching lines, is less detailed. Van Gogh finished by drawing a contour around the entire bust and adding a shadow at the bottom to suggest that it was standing on a surface. To the right of the warrior is a vertical line, the function of which is unclear. There are several horizontal folds in the paper. Most of them, like the one running through the neck, are old and were already in the sheet before the drawing was made. Only the one running through the chest was made later, and shows traces of wear. The same distribution of detailed and sketchy passages can be seen in Toulouse-Lautrec's charcoal study of the same cast (fig. 251j), for which he used vertical and horizontal assisting lines in order to fix the model. That method is not encountered in Van Gogh's studies.<sup>20</sup>

Both the initial, exploratory contour lines and the detailing of the *Torso of Venus* (cat. 260) were drawn using black chalk with a brown tint. That this material is rather difficult to remove and thus unsuitable for an initial draft is clear from the smudged areas and damage to the paper caused by Van Gogh's determined attempts to erase lines. The shading is a combination of hatching and stumping. The base was laid down with several bold, questing lines but was not worked up. When he had finished the modelling Van Gogh drew a firm contour around the figure, which is particularly evident on the right, where it contrasts with the light passages in the torso. The figure is framed with lines at the top, bottom and left which, as with the *Venus de Milo* (cat. 256), may have been derived from Cassagne's method.

Another *Torso of Venus* (cat. 261) was laid down with black chalk. There is little evidence of an initial search for the contours, apart from in the base. Van Gogh evidently got the figure right first time. The torso is constructed with quite bold hatching and cross-hatching. The rounded forms are unconvincing because the lines are so long and the transitions between light and shade so abrupt. The dark contours were once again done last. At lower right is a sketch of a pair of buttocks, probably from the same cast (see cat. 260, where the torso is viewed from the back).

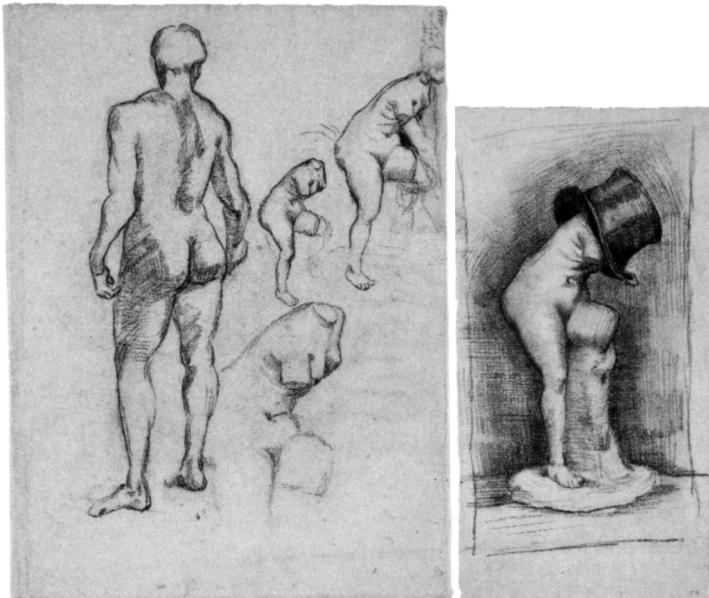
Long hatching lines were also used in *Idol* (cat. 262). The figure is brightly lit from front right, which creates pronounced chiaroscuro contrasts. The lines are very close together in the shaded areas. After an ini-



251h *Torso of Venus*, 1st-2nd century BC.  
London, British Museum.

tial draft in charcoal, when the right foot was placed too high up, Van Gogh drew the figure with the same soft black chalk he used for cat. 253, the sheet to which this one was originally attached. One notable feature of the right hand is the missing little finger, which identifies the subject as a plaster cast.

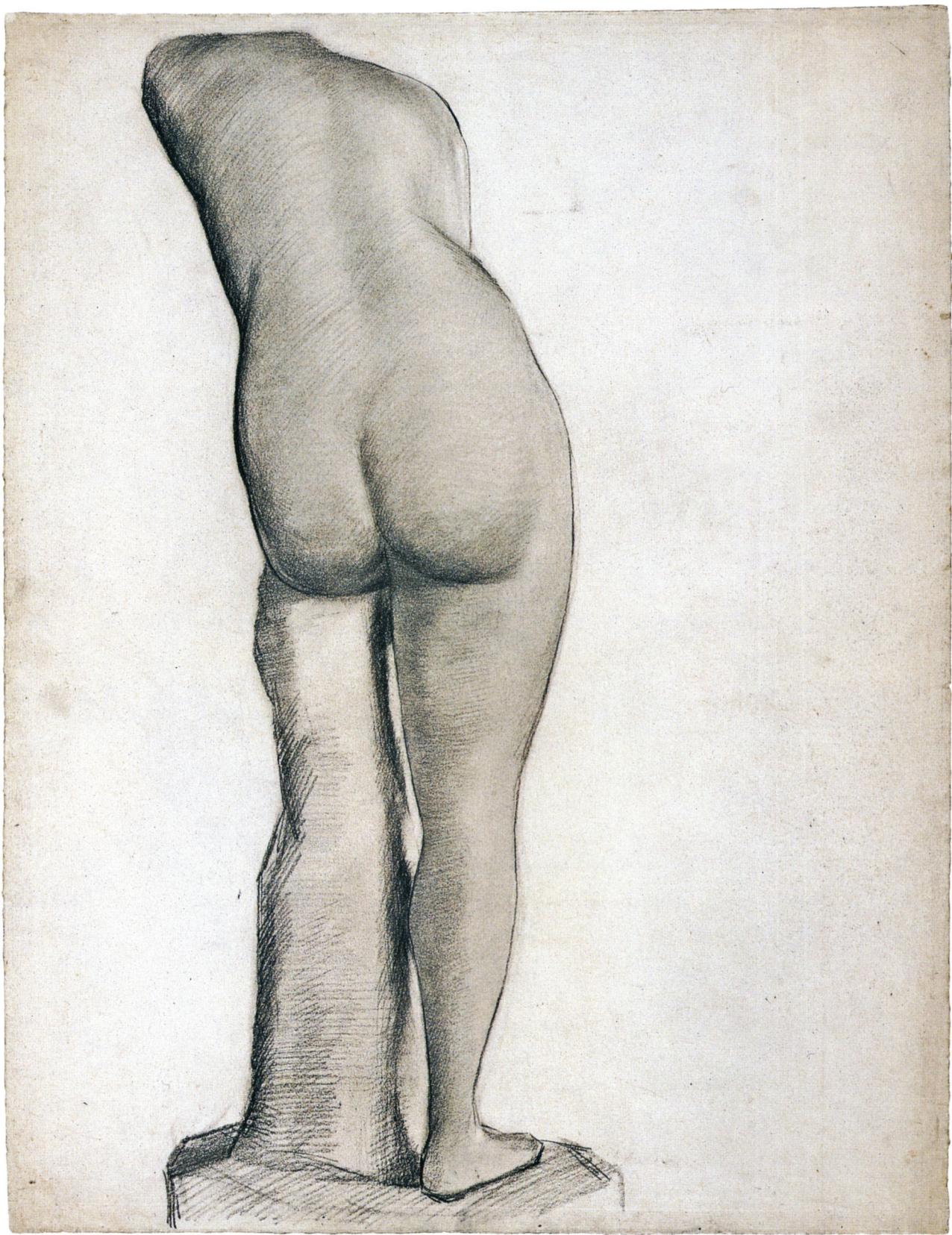
In cat. 263 Van Gogh drew with hard black chalk over a charcoal draft. The stiffer material enabled him to make the hatching more delicate, and its lines are also shorter than in the previous two sheets, which certainly improved the modelling. Only in the lower legs are the lines a little wooden, with the shadows not corresponding to illumination from the right. Van Gogh drew a vertical line to help him with the proportions which is now only visible below the right foot. This is the only one of his drawings from Cormon's studio to have such an assisting line. Beside the



251<sup>i</sup> Reconstruction of cats. 254 and 267.



251<sup>i</sup> Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Bust of a young warrior*, 1883-86. Albi, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec.



257 Venus



258 Torso of Venus



259 Bust of a young warrior



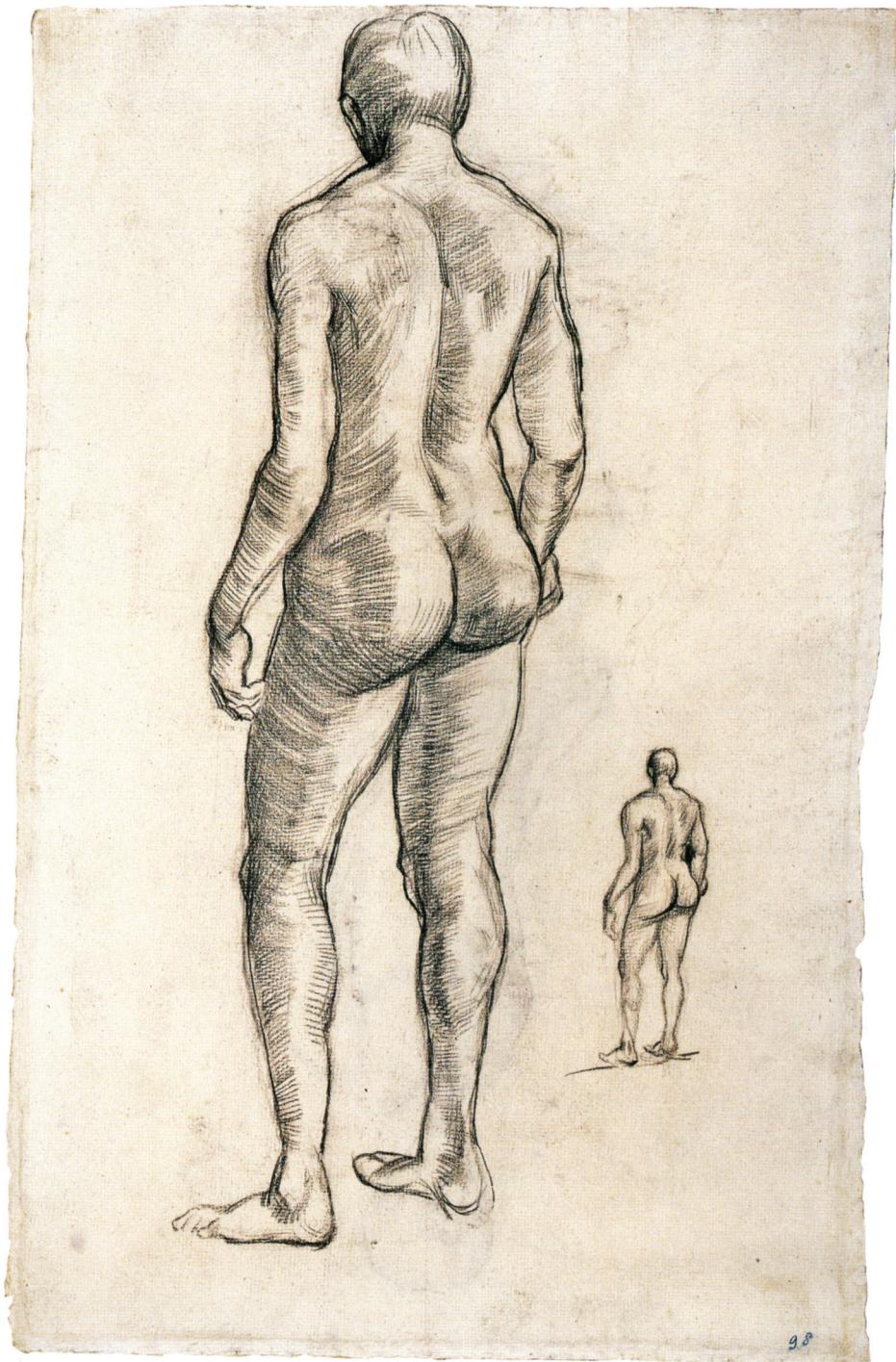
260 Torso of Venus



261 Torso of Venus



262 Idol

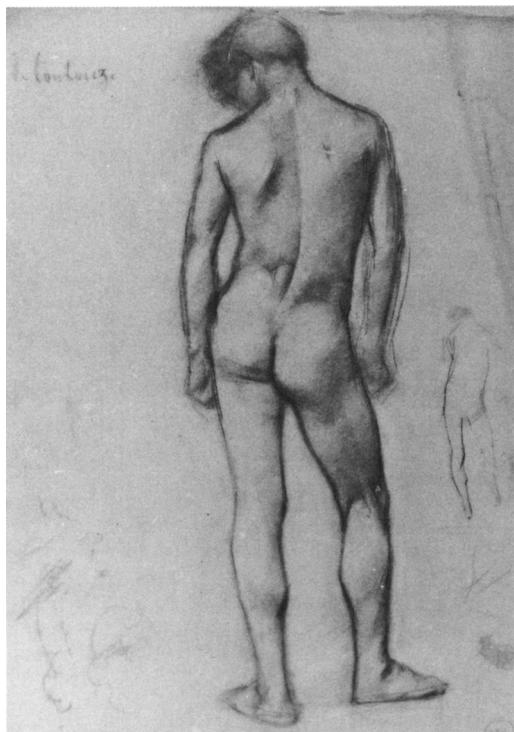


263 Idol

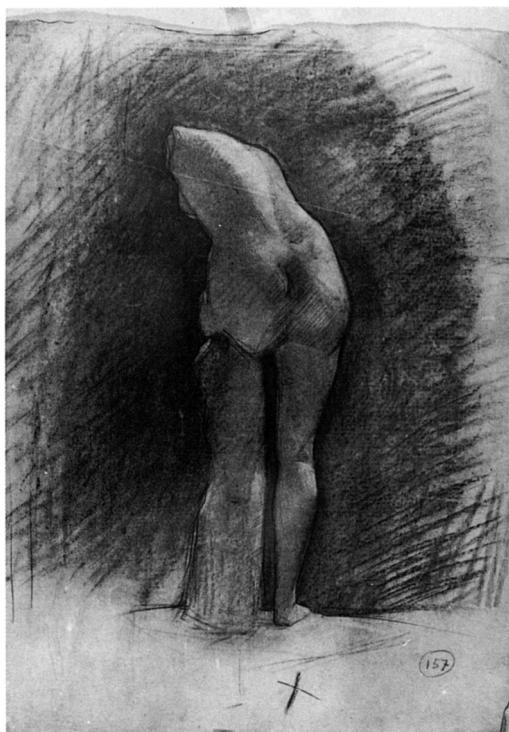
large study is a smaller one of the same cast seen from the same angle. It is possible that making a rapid, small sketch after a large completed study may have been an exercise in itself. Similar small repetitions are also found in the drawings which Toulouse-Lautrec made at Cormon's (fig. 251k).

The modelling of another *Torso of Venus* (cat. 264) is largely composed of sketchy hatching with black chalk. Van Gogh used the same material for a background consisting of short, tightly packed lines which follow the outlines of the cast, enfolding it in a sort of halo.<sup>21</sup> In the lower part of the background there are scratchy lines, as well as horizontal ones forming cross-hatching. Van Gogh stumped the background around the contours, giving it a woolly look, possibly because he found the transition from figure to background too harsh. Toulouse-Lautrec, too, occasionally added a fleecy, dark background to the models he drew at Cormon's (fig. 251l). Placing a subject against a dark background gives

<sup>21</sup> See cat. 217 for this way of filling in the background. The halo probably had a symbolic meaning in the Antwerp portrait, but that is not the case here.



251k Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Nude study*, 1883-86. Albi, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec.



251l Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Venus*, 1883-86. Albi, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec.

<sup>22</sup> See letter 559/448 and cat. 218.

<sup>23</sup> The half that was torn off is now lost.

it more volume. This may have been a special exercise at Cormon's or, as in Antwerp, a privilege reserved for students who had already mastered the contour.<sup>22</sup>

The paper has become puckered and worn to the left of the buttocks. Part of the watermark is visible below the base. Although this looks like a finished study, certain elements are not very successful. The curve of the buttocks is wrong, and the rear thigh should be resting on the pedestal. The two parts of that leg do not connect up behind the front leg, whereas they do in cat. 261.

Three drawing materials were used for a *Torso of Venus* (cat. 265): charcoal for the first draft of the outlines, black chalk with a brownish tinge and ordinary black chalk for the detailing. As in cat. 264, Van Gogh modelled the figure with sketchy hatching, and later reinforced the contours. One quarter of the way down the sheet there is a horizontal fold which Van Gogh himself made in order to centre the nude study on the other side (cat. 241), which means that the latter was made after the torso. Beside the base at lower right are lines from that drawing which have penetrated the paper and were smudged, probably by a drawing which lay beneath the sheet when Van Gogh drew the nude study. In view of the torn edge on the left of this *Torso of Venus*, it is very possible that that underlying sheet was originally attached to it.<sup>23</sup>

The first indications for the contour lines and the detailing of the *Torso of Venus* (cat. 266) were drawn with black chalk. Those partly erased contours are mainly visible in the base, which Van Gogh did not go over again with black chalk. However, those greyish lines can also be seen in the shoulders, around the waist on the left and along the right hip. The base is truncated by the bottom of the paper. Scratches in the hatched passage in the left waist of the figure are due to irregularities in the chalk.

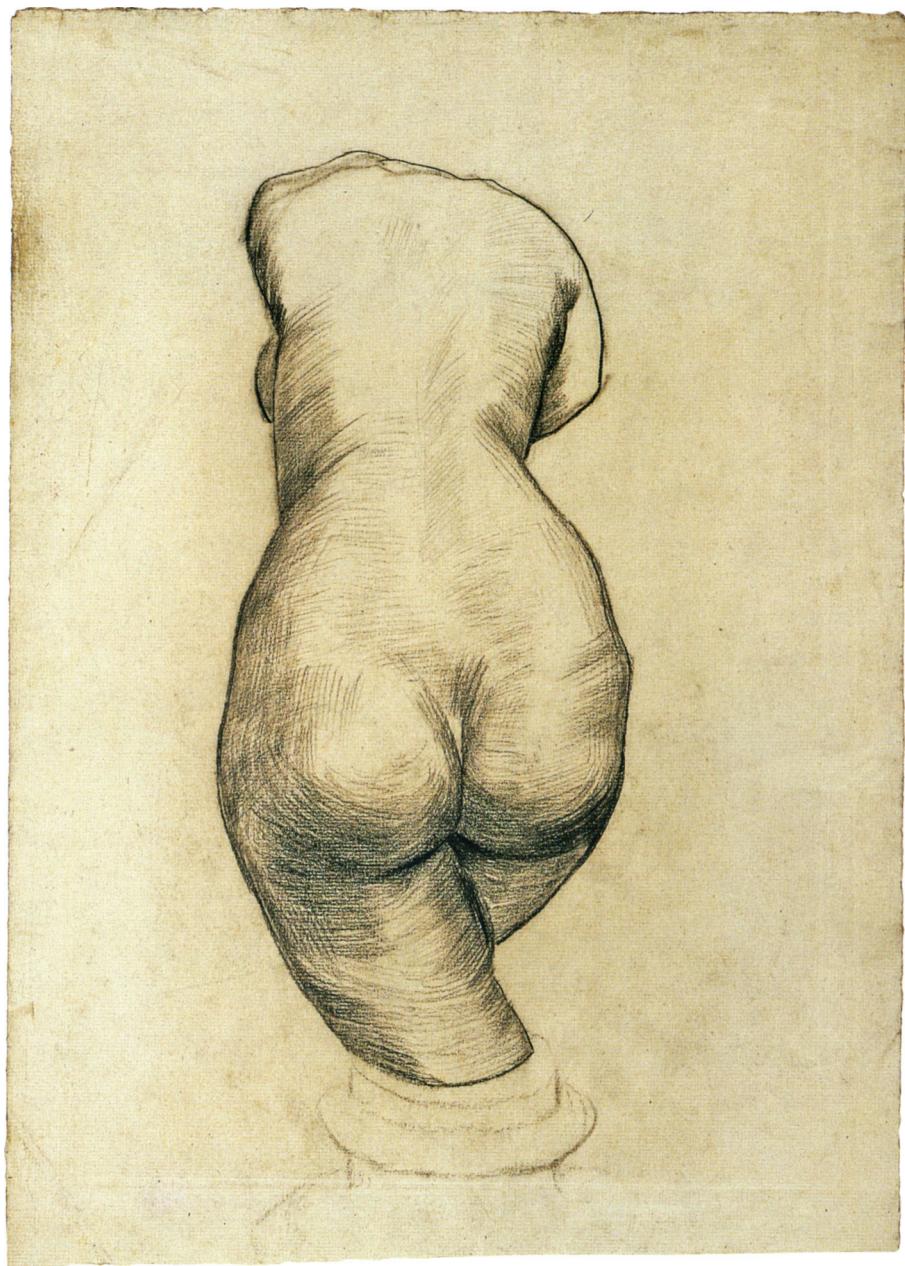
The humorous sketch in which Van Gogh used *Venus* as a hat-stand (cat. 267) was drawn with black chalk with a brownish tint. The shaded passages in the figure were done with stumping and hatching, while the light areas in the hat are reserves. The graphic treatment of the background is very similar to that in the *Torso of Venus* (cat. 264), consisting of short hatching lines following the figure's outlines supplemented with horizontal lines at the bottom to form cross-hatching. Once again, the lines closest to the contour have been slightly softened by stumping. This sheet was originally attached to cat. 254 on the left (fig. 251i), which is the only other study in which Van Gogh took a light-hearted approach to a plaster cast. He probably tore the sheet in two in order to isolate *Venus* in



264 Torso of Venus



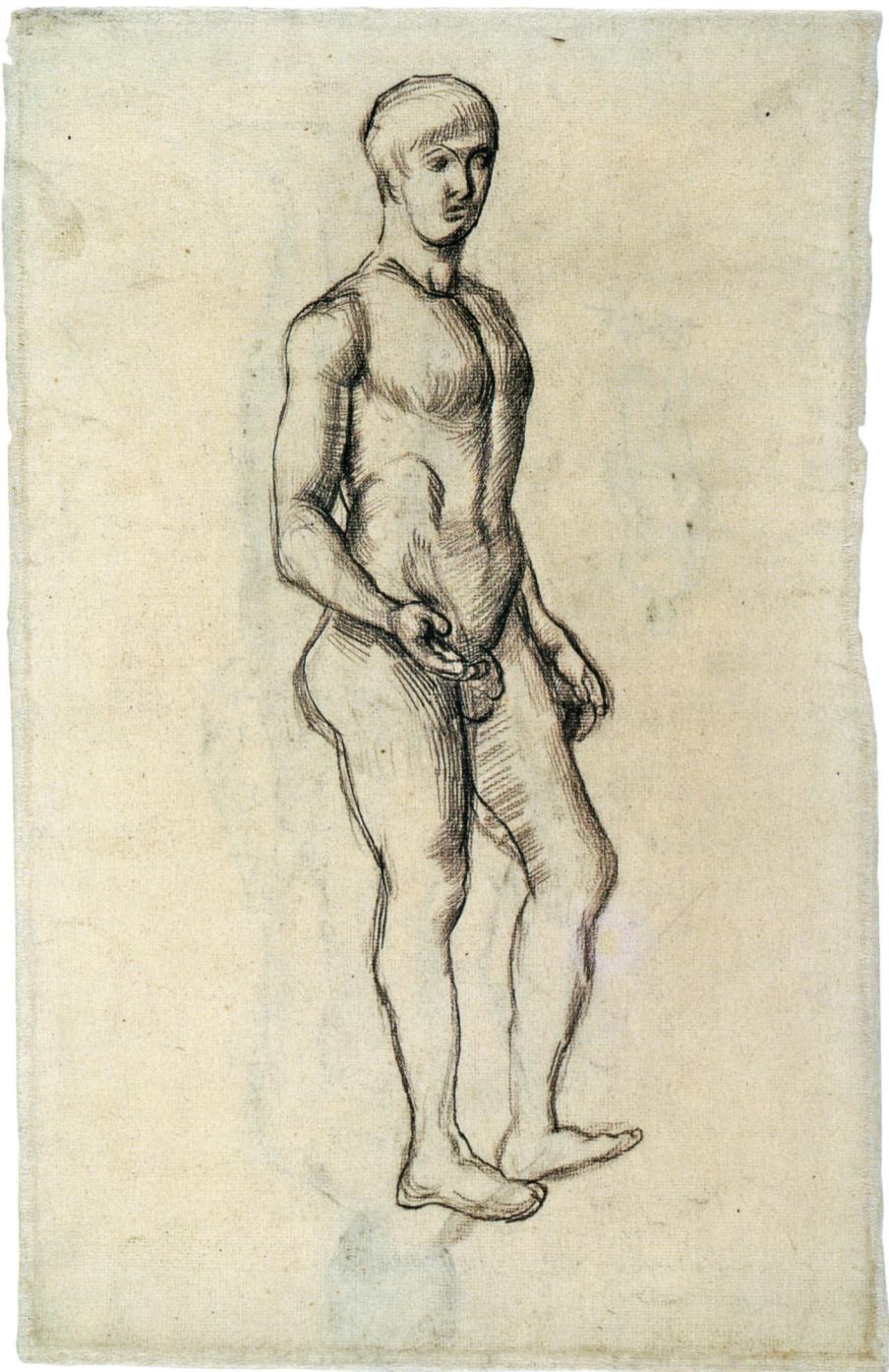
265 Torso of Venus



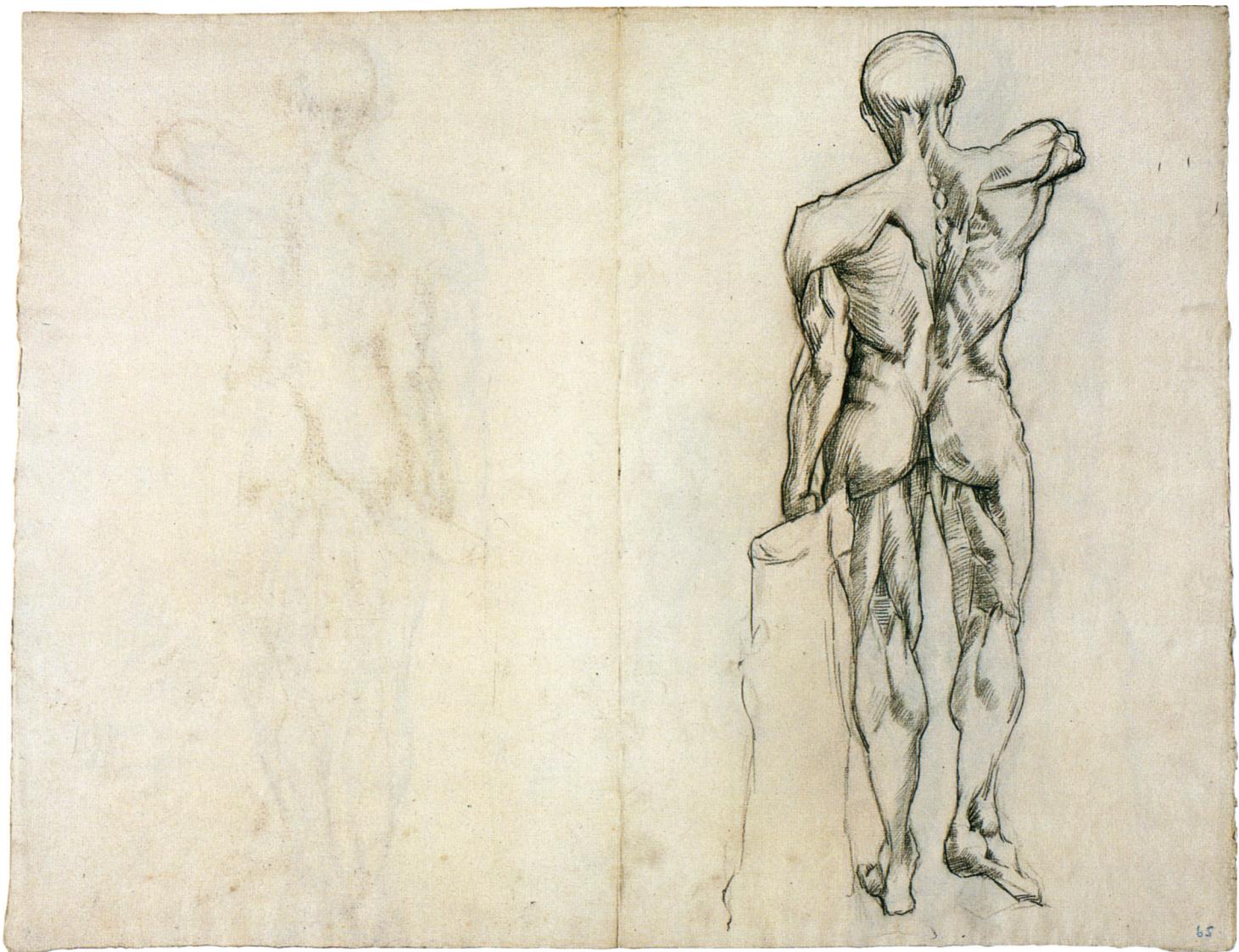
266 Torso of Venus



267 Venus in a top hat

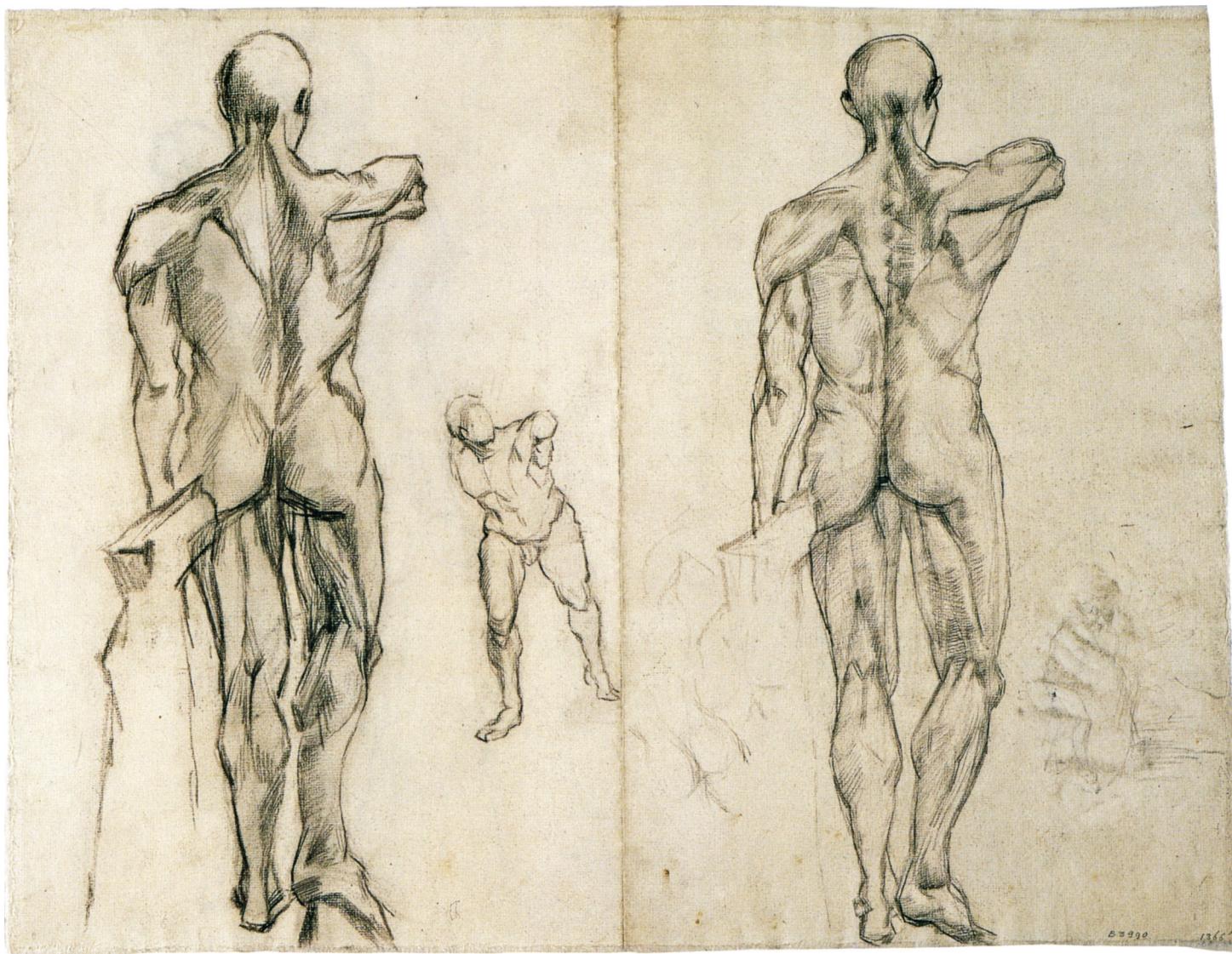


268 Idol



269 L'Ecorché

65



270 L'Ecorché and Borghese gladiator



271 Fragment of a Venus

*a top hat*, for he placed framing lines around it after it was finished and tore off a strip of paper some 5 cm across on the right to centre the image.

The modelling of *Idol* (cat. 268) is concentrated on the upper part of the body. As in the other drawings after this cast, and in his studies of *Venus*, he made the idealised, classical body more human – in this case by adding a suggestion of chest hair. Van Gogh laid the drawing down with charcoal and worked it up with black chalk, employing hatching lines running both perpendicular and parallel to the forceful and angular contour line. There is no detailing at all in the lower legs, and no attempt was made to correct the odd angle of the rear foot.

In the three studies after Houdon's *L'Ecorché* (cats. 269, 270), which are on the recto and verso of the same sheet, Van Gogh experimented with the depiction of bundles of muscles.<sup>24</sup> All three studies were laid down with charcoal and worked up with black chalk. He started by folding the sheet in two to give himself four half sheets on which to work. The first study was probably cat. 269, which was drawn on the half sheet that was on the top, with the fold on the left. After he had finished it he refolded the sheet back on top of cat. 269 and drew the flayed man on the right of cat. 270. While he was drawing this study the heaviest lines of the first one, which was now on the inside of the folded paper, were transferred to the left side of cat. 269. For the third study, Van Gogh simply turned the folded sheet over. The angle of view changed for every study, from immediately behind the cast to a little further to the right. The detailing of cat. 269 is midway between that of the elaborate study on the right of cat. 270 and its sketchy, expressive companion on the left. In addition to the studies of the flayed man, Van Gogh used the sheet for a few sketches in black chalk. On the left of cat. 270 is a *Borghese gladiator* without the arms – the only drawing after that cast in Van Gogh's œuvre.<sup>25</sup> To the left of the *Ecorché* on the right of cat. 270 are swift sketches of its buttocks and shoulders. To the right of the main figure is a small drawing which is difficult to make out because it was almost entirely erased. It appears to be a figure with bent knees seen from the side.

The purpose of the last and sketchiest of the cast studies is unclear (cat. 271). At first sight it seems to be a fragment of a drawing which was once much larger both at the top and on the right. The trouble is that the top edge is the original deckle edge of the paper, so the drawing could never have been any higher. It is possible that Van Gogh regarded the study as an experiment with different kinds of drawing material, for in addition to black chalk he used a greasy black type with a brown tinge,

<sup>24</sup> A fourth study of the flayed figure is on cat. 246, where it is seen from the front with the muscles depicted quite meticulously. It is described under cat. 246.

<sup>25</sup> Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 269, 270, also recognises the Borghese gladiator in a small sketch in one of Van Gogh's sketchbooks, inv. d 412 V/1962. However, there are considerable differences in the position of the legs and the angle between the torso and the legs.

26 That drawing is in the collection of the Van Gogh Museum, inv. d 610 V/1962.

27 Heenk 1995, pp. 158, 159.

28 The study of a cast on the verso of the drawing by Bernard is entirely in charcoal, which is unheard of in Van Gogh's Paris œuvre. On top of that, it lacks his sureness of touch, and the paper provides no grounds for altering the attribution of the study to Bernard.

29 See cats. 238-250.

30 The paper of cats. 239, 255, 267 and 262 has no watermark, but the edges do fit precisely with those of cats. 238, 254 and 253 respectively, which are watermarked.

31 See cats. 238-250 for more information on this paper. The bulk of Toulouse-Lautrec's studies done in Cormon's studio are also on Michallet paper.

32 The only other sheet with this watermark in Van Gogh's œuvre was used for cast studies which he did at home (see cats. 277, 280).

33 Otterlo 1990, p. 179, tentatively places all the works on Whatman 1884 paper to the Antwerp period, although it is perfectly

and a blue chalk. One notable feature is that he moistened the black chalk in the support to the left of the leg, the only time he did so in the series of Cormon studies apart from cat. 241.

Liesbeth Heenk has suggested that the drawing is actually by Emile Bernard, her reasoning being that the erotic scene on the other side of the sheet (cat. 272) fits better in Bernard's œuvre than in Van Gogh's, and that there are similarities in style and subject with a fragmentary study of a plaster cast on the verso of a drawing by Bernard (fig. 251m).<sup>26</sup> She then confuses the issue by remarking that the fragmentary study might be by Van Gogh.<sup>27</sup> However, the draughtsmanship, drawing materials and paper of cats. 271 and 272 give no cause to attribute the drawings to anyone other than Van Gogh.<sup>28</sup> There is, though, a study of a plaster cast which has always been regarded as a Van Gogh which is in fact probably by another artist (see Appendix 2, no. 2.4).

As in his nude studies, Van Gogh used various kinds of paper for his studies of casts.<sup>29</sup> The commonest is the laid paper with the watermark **MICHALLET**, which accounts for eight of the 15 sheets, most of which are drawn on both sides (cats. 253-256, 262-265, 267-270).<sup>30</sup> Van Gogh only used this kind of paper in Cormon's studio.<sup>31</sup> Another laid type which was again restricted to studio works and upon which he only drew studies of plaster casts, has no watermark and is of irregular thickness. He used four sheets of that paper for cats. 240, 251, 252, 259-261 and 266. The laid paper with the *Fragment of a Venus* (cat. 271) also lacks a mark but is of better quality than the above sheets. Just one cast study from the Cormon period, a *Torso of Venus* (cat. 258), is on laid paper with the watermark **L.BERVILLE**.<sup>32</sup> The most academic drawing in the group (cat. 257) is the sole study on a sheet of pale grey wove paper with the watermark **J WHATMAN 1884**. Van Gogh had already used that paper for four of his Antwerp figure studies. The only other sheet with that watermark from the Paris period has a nude study done in Cormon's studio (cat. 249).<sup>33</sup>

The usual size of paper for the cast studies drawn at Cormon's – making up eight of the 15 sheets – is approximately 47.5 x 31 cm, which corresponds to half a sheet.<sup>34</sup> Van Gogh used full sheets on four occasions: the irregular laid paper twice (cats. 240, 252 259 and 260), **MICHALLET** once (cats. 250, 269) and **J WHATMAN 1884** once (cat. 257). The Whatman wove paper, which measures 50.9 x 39.4 cm, is considerably smaller than the sheets of laid paper with their average dimensions of 62 x 47.5 cm. Van Gogh tore one sheet of Michallet paper into two unequal parts, with the result that the paper with cats. 238 and 254 is larger than a half sheet and the other smaller (cats. 239, 267). In addition,



251<sup>m</sup> Emile Bernard, *Fragment of Venus*, c. 1886. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

he tore a 5 cm strip off the latter in order to centre the study. Only one drawing (cat. 271) is on a quarter sheet. All of Van Gogh's later studies of casts are on quarter sheets (cats. 276-286).<sup>35</sup>

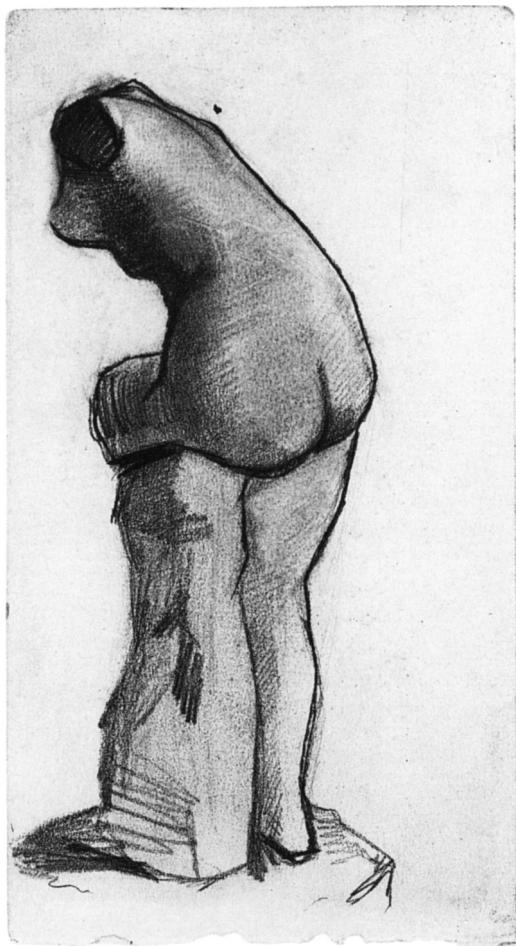
Van Gogh, who was always short of money, made the fullest possible use of the paper for his studies. Not only did he tear it into smaller pieces, but he also drew on both sides in no fewer than 11 of the 15 cases, on both full and half sheets. It is probably no coincidence that the studies on two of the four sheets drawn on one side only are highly worked up (cats. 257 and 258).<sup>36</sup>

possible that Van Gogh took that paper with him to Paris, or bought new supplies of it there.

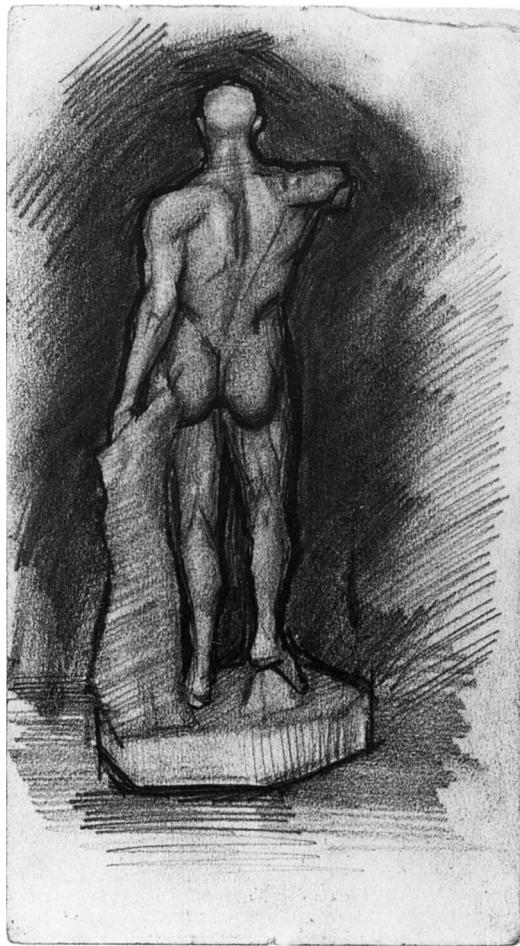
34 The sheets in question are the supports for cats. 241, 251, 253, 255, 256, 258, 261-266 and 268. Heenk 1995, p. 149, believes that cat. 258 is on a full sheet of L.BERVILLE paper, but this is contradicted by both the dimensions and the torn right edge. This watermark is found in Toulouse-Lautrec's œuvre in paper with a Lalanne countermark.

35 As already noted by Heenk 1995, p. 143.

36 The other two sheets with drawings on only one side are cats. 266 and 253.



251<sup>n</sup> Sketchbook sheet (F- JH add. 13), autumn 1886. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

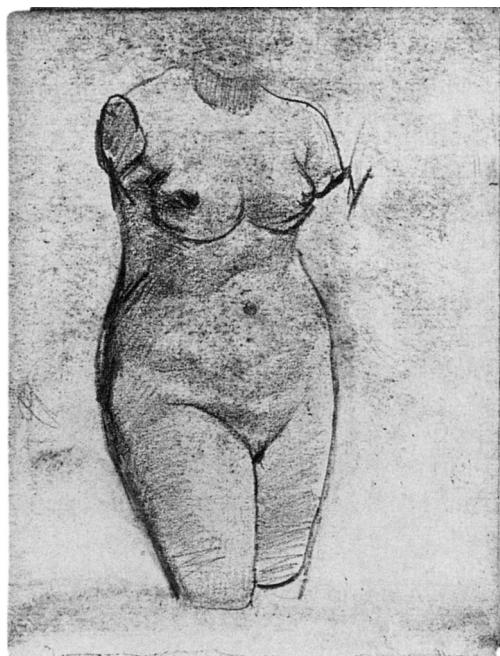


251<sup>o</sup> Sketchbook sheet (F- JH add. 14), autumn 1886. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

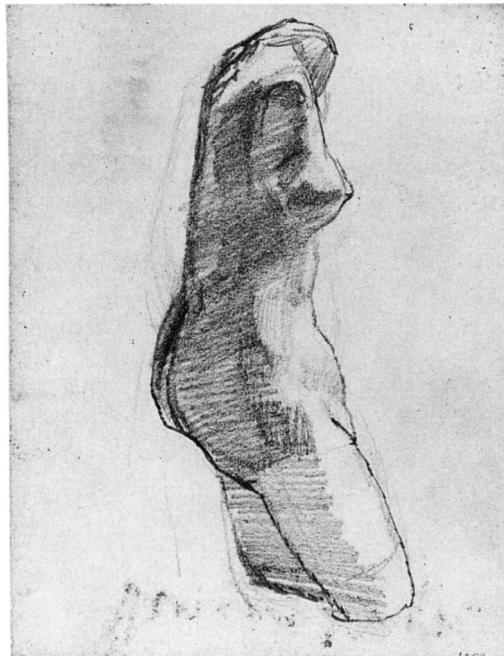
37 The sketchbooks are in the Van Gogh Museum, inv. d 412 V/1962 and d 413 V/1962.

38 These two sketches of plaster casts are the only such studies which Hulsker assigns to the Antwerp period; see Hulsker 1996, p. 218.

Van Gogh made a further four studies after plaster casts in two of his sketchbooks.<sup>37</sup> The subjects of two of them feature in the drawings discussed above, namely *Venus* and *L'Ecorché*, so they were probably made at Cormon's (figs. 251n and o). Although small they are reasonably well-detailed. The other two sketches are of a torso of *Venus* that is found nowhere else in Van Gogh's œuvre (figs. 251p and q), and it is not inconceivable that he drew them in Antwerp.<sup>38</sup>



251p Sketchbook sheet (F 1693h JH 1002),  
1886. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



251q Sketchbook sheet (F 1693i JH 1003),  
1886. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

251 *Venus*

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Pencil on laid paper

47.5 x 31.5 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 261

Inv. d 159 V/1962

SD 1709v JH 1050

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 582, 672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 438, no. 2.426; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 456, vol. 2, pl. CCLII; Heenk 1995, p. 144; Hulsker 1996, pp. 228, 229.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

252 *Torso of Venus*

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Black chalk on laid paper

61.1 x 45.5 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 260

Inv. d 180 V/1962

SD 1708v JH 1065

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 582, 672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 440.

no. 2.435; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 456, vol. 2, pl. CCLII; Heenk 1995, pp. 143, 144; Hulsker 1996, p. 232.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

253 *Idol*

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Charcoal, black chalk, on laid paper

47.7 x 30.5 cm

Watermark: MICHALLET

Unsigned

Inv. d 13 V/1962

SD 1364a JH 1041

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 479, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 435, no. 2.404; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 353, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXII; Otterlo 1990, p. 196; Heenk 1995, p. 145; Hulsker 1996, p. 227.

EXHIBITION

1990 Otterlo, no. 141.

254 *Idol and sketches of Venus*

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Black chalk on laid paper

47.3 x 35.2 cm

Watermark: MICHALLET

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 238

Inv. d 160 V/1962

SD 1710v JH 1048

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62

V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 582, 672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 435, no. 2.407; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 457, vol. 2, pl. CCLII; Heenk 1995, pp. 144, 145; Hulsker 1996, pp. 228, 229.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

255 *Idol*

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Charcoal, black chalk, on laid paper

47.7 x 31.3 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 262

Inv. d 14 V/1962

SD 1364bv JH 1042

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 479, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 435, no. 2.405; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 353, 354, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXII; Heenk 1995, p. 145; Hulsker 1996, p. 228.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

**256 Venus de Milo**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Black chalk on laid paper

47.6 x 31.5 cm

Watermark: MICHALLET

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 264

Inv. d 402 V/1962

F 137IV JH -

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 483, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 440,  
no. 2.439; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 356, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXIII;  
Heenk 1995, p. 141.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

**257 Venus**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Charcoal (?), black chalk, on wove  
paper

50.9 x 39.7 cm

Watermark: J WHATMAN 1884

Unsigned

Inv. d 399 V/1962

F 1363g JH 1052

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 479, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 439,  
no. 2.428; Otterlo 1990, pp. 179,  
190; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1,  
pp. 352, 353, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXII;  
Heenk 1995, pp. 132, 138, 144;  
Hulsker 1996, p. 230.

EXHIBITIONS

1956 Haarlem, no. 45; 1990  
Otterlo, no. 137.

**258 Torso of Venus**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Charcoal, pencil, on laid paper  
48.9 x 31.8 cm

Watermark: L.BERVILLE

Unsigned

Inv. d 158 V/1962

SD 1707 JH 1067

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 582, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 440,  
no. 2.437; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 456, vol. 2, pl. CCLII;  
Heenk 1995, pp. 144, 149;  
Hulsker 1996, p. 232.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

**259 Bust of a young  
warrior**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Charcoal, black chalk with a  
brown tinge, on laid paper  
61.7 x 48.2 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 240

Inv. d 169 V/1962

SD 1701r JH 1081

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 580, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 441,  
no. 2.440; Paris 1988, pp. 70, 71,  
no. 16; Otterlo 1990, p. 195;  
De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 454,  
vol. 2, pl. CCI; Heenk 1995,  
pp. 143-45; Hulsker 1996, p. 234.

EXHIBITIONS

1988 Paris, no. 16; 1990 Otterlo,  
no. 140.

**260 Torso of Venus**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Black chalk with a brown tinge  
on laid paper

61.1 x 45.5 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 252

Inv. d 180 V/1962

SD 1708r JH 1064

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 582, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 440,  
no. 2.434; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 456, vol. 2, pl. CCLII;  
Heenk 1995, pp. 143, 144;  
Hulsker 1996, p. 231.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

**261 Torso of Venus**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Black chalk on laid paper

47.5 x 31.5 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 251

Inv. d 159 V/1962

SD 1709r JH 1066

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 582, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 440,  
no. 2.436; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 456, vol. 2, pl. CCLII;  
Heenk 1995, p. 144; Hulsker  
1996, p. 232.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

**262 Idol**

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Charcoal, black chalk, on laid  
paper

47.7 x 31.3 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 255

Inv. d 14 V/1962

F 1364br JH 1046

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 479, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 436,  
no. 2.410; Otterlo 1990, p. 197;  
De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 353,  
vol. 2, pl. CCXXXII; Hulsker 1996,  
pp. 228, 229.

**EXHIBITION**  
1990 Otterlo, no. 142.

**263 Idol**

**OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887**  
Charcoal, black chalk, on laid  
paper  
47.5 x 30.8 cm  
Watermark: MICHALLET  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 268

Inv. d 15 V/1962  
F 1364dr JH 1047

**PROVENANCE**  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1931-62 on loan  
to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 480, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 435,  
no. 2.406; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 354, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXII;  
Heenk 1995, p. 145; Hulsker  
1996, pp. 228, 229.

**EXHIBITIONS**  
None.

**264 Torso of Venus**

**OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887**  
Black chalk on laid paper  
47.6 x 31.5 cm  
Watermark: MICHALLET  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 256

Inv. d 402 V/1962  
F 1371r JH 1068

**PROVENANCE**  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**  
De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 119,  
vol. 4, pl. CXXXVI; De la Faille  
1970, pp. 483, 660; Amsterdam  
1987, p. 440, no. 2.438; De la  
Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 119, 356,  
vol. 2, pl. CXXXVI; Heenk 1995,  
p. 144; Hulsker 1996, p. 232.

**EXHIBITIONS**  
1953 Assen, no. 42; 1953-54  
Bergen op Zoom, no. 50.

**265 Torso of Venus**

**OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887**  
Charcoal, black chalk, black chalk  
with a brown tinge, on laid paper  
31.4 x 47.5 cm  
Watermark: MICHALLET  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 241

Inv. d 31 V/1962  
F 1363av JH 1063

**PROVENANCE**  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 480, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 437,  
no. 2.421; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 351, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXI;  
Heenk 1995, p. 144; Hulsker  
1996, p. 232.

**EXHIBITIONS**  
1961 Scarborough, no catalogue;  
1988 Rome, no. 80.

**267 Venus in a top hat**

**OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887**  
Black chalk with a brown tinge  
on laid paper  
38.3 x 19.8 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 239

Inv. d 36 V/1962  
F 1363fr JH 1051

**PROVENANCE**  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 480, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 435, no. 2.409;  
De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 354,  
vol. 2, pl. CCXXXII; Heenk 1995,  
p. 145; Hulsker 1996, p. 227.

**EXHIBITION**  
1931 Amsterdam, no. 171.

**269 L'Ecorché**

**OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887**  
Charcoal, black chalk, on laid  
paper  
47.9 x 62.6 cm

loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 478, 479,  
660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 438, no.  
2.427; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 352, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXII;  
Heenk 1995, pp. 144, 145; Hulsker  
1996, p. 229.

**EXHIBITION**  
1962 London, no. 32.

**268 Idol**

**OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887**  
Charcoal, black chalk, on laid  
paper  
47.5 x 30.8 cm  
Watermark: MICHALLET  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 263

Inv. d 15 V/1962  
F 1364dv JH 1040

**PROVENANCE**  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1931-62 on loan  
to the Stedelijk Museum, Amster-  
dam; 1962 Vincent van Gogh  
Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to  
the Stedelijk Museum, Amster-  
dam; 1973 on permanent loan to  
the Van Gogh Museum, Amster-  
dam.

**LITERATURE**  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 479, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 437,  
no. 2.421; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 351, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXI;  
Heenk 1995, p. 144; Hulsker  
1996, p. 232.

**EXHIBITIONS**  
1961 Scarborough, no catalogue;  
1988 Rome, no. 80.

**267 Venus in a top hat**

**OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887**  
Black chalk with a brown tinge  
on laid paper  
38.3 x 19.8 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 239

Inv. d 36 V/1962  
F 1363fr JH 1051

**PROVENANCE**  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 480, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 435, no. 2.409;  
De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 354,  
vol. 2, pl. CCXXXII; Heenk 1995,  
p. 145; Hulsker 1996, p. 227.

**EXHIBITION**  
1931 Amsterdam, no. 171.

Watermark: MICHALLET

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 270

Inv. d 400 V/ 1962

SD 1702v JH 1038

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62

V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 581, 672;

Amsterdam 1987, p. 436, no. 2.413;

De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 455,

vol. 2, pl. CCLI; Heenk 1995,

pp. 141, 142; Hulsker 1996,

pp. 226, 227, 230.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

270 L'Ecorché and Borghese gladiator

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Charcoal, black chalk, on laid paper

47.9 x 62.6 cm

Watermark: MICHALLET

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 269

Inv. d 400 V/1962

SD 1702r JH 1037

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62

V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 580, 581,

672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 436,

no. 2.412; Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 269, 270; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 454, 455, vol. 2, pl. CCLI; Heenk 1995, pp. 141, 142; Hulsker 1996, pp. 226, 227, 230.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

271 Fragment of a Venus

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Black and blue chalk, black chalk with a brown tinge, wash, on laid paper

26.6 x 22.1 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 272

Inv. d 303 V/1972 verso

F - JH -

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-72

V.W. van Gogh; 1972 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1972-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

Amsterdam 1987, p. 442,

no. 2.447; Heenk 1995, pp. 158,

159.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

## 272 Couple making love

This very candid drawing led an unobtrusive existence in the Van Gogh Museum until it was published in the 1987 catalogue of the collection.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to make out why neither De la Faille nor Hulsker included it in their œuvre catalogues. They may have been unaware of its existence, apprehensive about the consequences of publication, or simply did not believe the attribution, but it is certainly remarkable that Hulsker omitted it from the addenda in the revised edition of his book, which came out in 1996. Matthias Arnold, obviously ignorant of the 1987 catalogue, actually thought he had stumbled across a minor scandal in 1995, voicing his suspicion that the drawing had been suppressed out of respect or narrow-mindedness.<sup>2</sup>

Although Van Gogh did produce a few mildly erotic scenes (*see cats. 301, 302*), as well as one of a woman at her toilet (*cat. 287*), there is no other work in his œuvre that is so sexually explicit. It is not clear whether he saw a couple making love out of doors or added some trees and undergrowth to an erotic scene.

Despite the unusual subject, there is not the slightest reason to doubt that this drawing is by Van Gogh. The vigorous style, the modelling of the bodies with large, spherical volumes, and the rendering of the trees in the background are all clear evidence of his authorship.<sup>3</sup> It can be deduced that the drawing was made in Paris, for on the back is the leg of a plaster cast (*cat. 271*) which Van Gogh drew in Cormon's studio in the period autumn 1886 to January 1887. *Couple making love* probably dates from the same period.

The two torn edges show that the paper came from a larger sheet.<sup>4</sup> Both drawings (*cats. 271 and 272*) fill the entire surface of the paper, with the pencil lines of the latter probably extending beyond the present edges. It can therefore be assumed that Van Gogh made several studies on a large sheet which he then tore and cut into smaller pieces.

The scene is in pencil reinforced with black chalk in the shaded passages, in the heads and the genital regions. Some of the graphite was scratched off close to the left and right edges.

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Pencil, black chalk, on laid paper  
26.6 x 22.1 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 271

Inv. d 303 V/1972 recto  
F – JH –

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-72  
V.W. van Gogh; 1972 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1972-73 on loan  
to the Stedelijk Museum, Amster-  
dam; 1973 on permanent loan to  
the Van Gogh Museum, Amster-  
dam.

LITERATURE

Amsterdam 1987, p. 442,  
no. 2.446; Heenk 1995, p. 158.

EXHIBITIONS

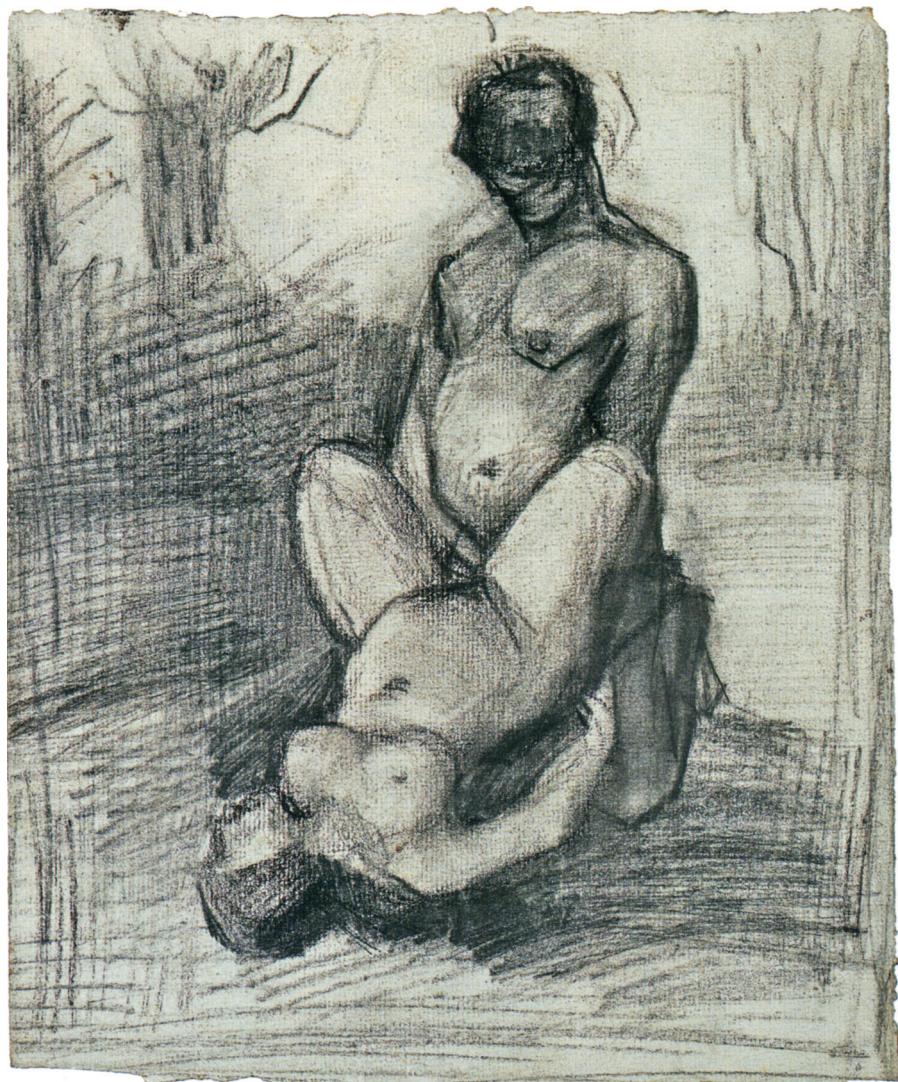
None.

<sup>1</sup> Amsterdam 1987, no. 2.446.

<sup>2</sup> Matthias Arnold, *Vincent van Gogh. Werk und Wirkung*, Munich 1995, pp. 117-18.

<sup>3</sup> Heenk 1995, pp. 158-59, believes that *Couple making love* may be by Bernard, not Van Gogh, because she feels that it is more at home in the for- mer's œuvre. She also suspects that the cast study on the verso may be by Bernard (see cat. 271). However, the robust style of both drawings bears not the slightest resemblance to Bernard's far more hesitant hand. Nor are there any doubts on the technical side.

<sup>4</sup> Viewed from the side with the *Couple making love*, the bottom and right edges are torn and the left one cut. The paper has its original edge at the top.



272 Couple making love

## 273 Skeleton

This vigorous pencil sketch shows a skeleton with its right arm raised and left leg extended; on the window ledge in the background is a black cat. The drawing is on a smooth piece of cardboard which, judging by its thickness and size, could well have been a calling card. It consists of two layers, as can be seen at the left edge, where it split when it was cut off the piece on which Van Gogh drew *Park with figures* (cat. 274), the only other drawing on such a stiff support.<sup>1</sup> Since the materials used in both sketches extend to the cut edges, the cardboard was cut before it was used. Both Van der Wolk and Heenk conclude that the two drawings have the same kind of support and consequently belong together,<sup>2</sup> but what they did not spot was that the supports were once of a piece. It is no longer possible to guess the original purpose of the cardboard, which measured 10.5 x 11.9 cm before it was cut.

*Skeleton* used to be dated to Van Gogh's Antwerp period, but given the relationship with *Park with figures* (cat. 274), which was indisputably made in Paris,<sup>3</sup> it is now possible to relocate the drawing to Paris. The most likely dating within that two-year period is in the months when Van Gogh was working in Cormon's studio. A photograph shows that Cormon had such a

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887

Pencil on thin cardboard  
10.5 x 5.8 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 29 V/1962  
F 1361 JH 998

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation (ratified in 1982);  
1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk  
Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on per-  
manent loan to the Van Gogh  
Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 117,  
vol. 4, pl. CXXXIII; Tralbaut 1948,  
pp. 258-60, 285, fig. XXXIV;  
Tralbaut 1958, p. 63, fig. LVI;  
Tralbaut 1969, p. 181; De la Faille  
1970, pp. 474, 660; Amsterdam  
1987, p. 430, no. 2.374; Van der  
Wolk 1987, pp. 11, 12; De la Faille  
1992, vol. 1, pp. 117, 350, vol. 2,  
pl. CXXXIII; Heenk 1995, pp. 158,  
270; Hulsker 1996, pp. 217, 218.

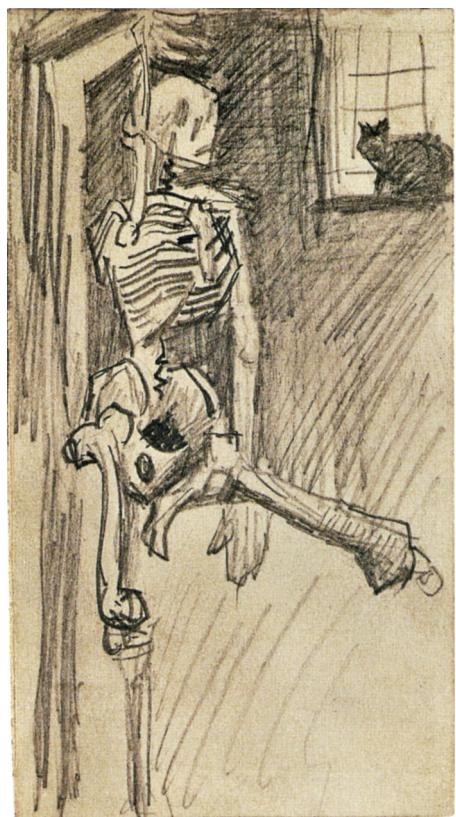
EXHIBITIONS  
1955 Antwerp, no. 154; 1962  
London, no. 27.

<sup>1</sup> The cardboard of cat. 274 is also split along the cut edge. Van der Wolk 1987, p. 12, describes the support as paper on cardboard, but doubts whether they had been glued together from the very outset. See cats. 274, 275 for the reason for his uncertainty.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, and Heenk 1995, p. 158. Heenk says that they are two sheets from a lost sketchbook, but the thickness of the cardboard alone makes this unlikely.



273<sup>a</sup> Photograph of Cormon's studio,  
c. 1885. Albi, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec.



273 Skeleton

skeleton (fig. 273a), and the sturdy stand from which it dangles in the drawing closely resembles the one in the photograph.

The combination of a skeleton and a cat gives the scene a slightly baleful air, but that is weakened by the skeleton's comical pose. It is impossible to say whether the drawing is a macabre studio joke or, as Heenk has suggested, as a design for an illustration for *Le Chat Noir*.<sup>4</sup> Van Gogh had long known of the cabaret and its publications, as 18 months previously, when he was living in Nuenen, he had tried to get a drawing of *The potato eaters* published in *Le Chat Noir*.<sup>5</sup> In addition, for the first few months of his stay in Paris he lived in the same street as the cabaret, the rue de Laval (now the rue Victor-Massé).<sup>6</sup>

Van Gogh took parts of skeletons as his subject in several other works in Antwerp and Paris. There are three painted skulls, one of them with a cigarette clamped between its jaws in what was undoubtedly a bit of fooling around in the studio.<sup>7</sup> In one of the two sketchbooks which Van Gogh used in Paris he drew a study of a pelvis (fig. 273b) and a sketch of two skeletons that have come to life (fig. 273c).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> There is an annotation on the back of the park view which is clearly associated with Paris; see cats. 274, 275, fig. 274b. Heenk and Van der Wolk support this redating, but De la Faille 1992 and Hulsker 1996 still maintain that the drawing was made in Antwerp.

<sup>4</sup> Heenk 1995, p. 158. The cat was the symbol of the cabaret and its periodical of the same name. See the Introduction for Van Gogh and illustrations.

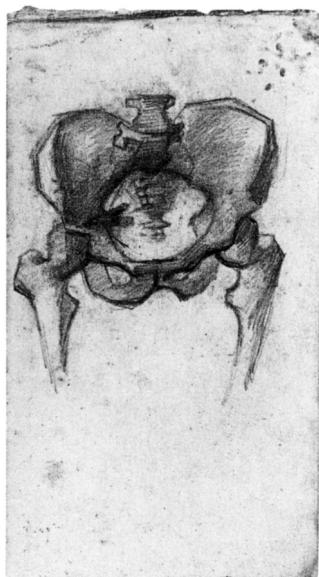
<sup>5</sup> See letter 495/399, with an integral sketch of *The potato eaters*, letter 496/400, with a loose sketch (F 1226 JH 736) which Theo could show to the owners of *Le Chat Noir*, and letter 497/401 commenting on the rejection of the drawing.

<sup>6</sup> Vincent and Theo lived at number 25 until June 1886. *Le Chat Noir* was at number 12.

<sup>7</sup> The skull with a cigarette (F 212 JH 999) was probably painted in Antwerp.

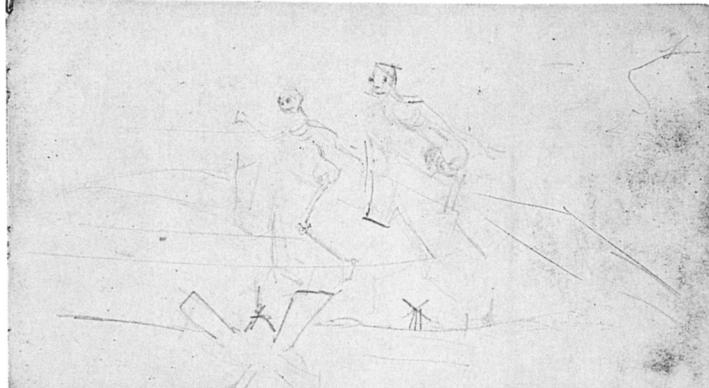
The other paintings of skulls (F 297 JH 1346 and F 297a JH 1347) were made in Paris.

<sup>8</sup> Inv. d 413 V/1962. Van Gogh drew the latter sketch at the Collège Rollin on the avenue Trudaine. This can be deduced from a photograph of the school's natural history cabinet, which contained a skeleton of a monkey in the same pose (see fig. 307b). Van Gogh probably knew of the Collège Rollin through Paul Signac, who had studied there from 1887 to 1889, and who got to know Van Gogh in the early months of 1887.



273b Sketchbook sheet (F – JH – ), 1887-

88. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



273c Sketchbook sheet (F – JH – ), 1887-

88. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

## 274, 275 Park views

<sup>1</sup> See cat. 273 for a more detailed description of the support of *Park with figures*. Van der Wolk 1987, p. 12, doubts that the two layers of the cardboard were indeed originally glued together because of the damage to the left edge of the top layer, which he wrongly took to be a crease and a stitching hole.

<sup>2</sup> The word 'adju' is probably an abbreviation of 'adjutant'. According to the Almanach de Commerce of 1885, De Gourlet was 'régisseur du palais de l'Élysée', meaning that he was the major-domo in charge of the staff, maintenance, provisioning and cleaning of the Elysée, the presidential palace. Tout-Paris 1886, a sort of gazetteer, lists him as 'inspecteur des palais nationaux'. Our thanks to Nienke Bakker for unearthing this information.

Among Van Gogh's Paris drawings are two closely related scenes of a park with a stretch of water in which the bare trees are reflected. However, there are considerable differences in the finish, drawing materials and size. *Park with figures* (cat. 274) is a rapid pencil sketch on a small piece of cardboard which was probably made on the spot. It seems that the *Park view* (cat. 275) was intended to be an elaboration in blue chalk of the same subject on a larger scale, but it was abandoned when still no more than a sketch. The two figures on the right bank of the water in the first drawing are missing in the second, in which Van Gogh was mainly concerned with establishing the correct proportions. In order to do so he closed the scene off at the bottom with two lines and then folded the paper back under the sheet along one of them, bringing the proportions closer to those of the *Park with figures*.

Van Gogh later used the two sketches for a painting which at first sight seems to have little in common with them because of its upright format and



274<sup>a</sup> *Park view* (F 224 JH 1112), 1886.

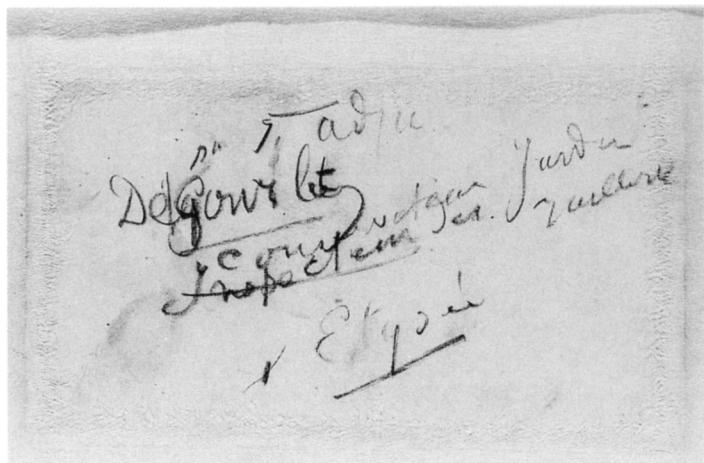
Private collection.

the leafier trees (fig. 274a). The shape of the pond or stream and the figures on the path to the right of it nevertheless show that it is the same spot. Glimpsed through the trees is the roof of a building which is missing in the drawings.

Until now it was thought that these two drawings were made in the spring of 1886. However, both of them can be associated with works which Van Gogh made in Cormon's studio in the period autumn 1886 to January 1887. For example, the cardboard of the *Park with figures* was cut off the support of the *Skeleton* (cat. 273).<sup>1</sup> On the back of the *Park view* is a study of feet (cat. 250) which was made at Cormon's.

Van Gogh probably abandoned the large drawing because he had spilled oil paint on the back of the sheet, the oil from which seeped through the paper, staining the front. He made the fold at the bottom after spilling the paint, for the stain just above the fold left an impression on the strip beneath.

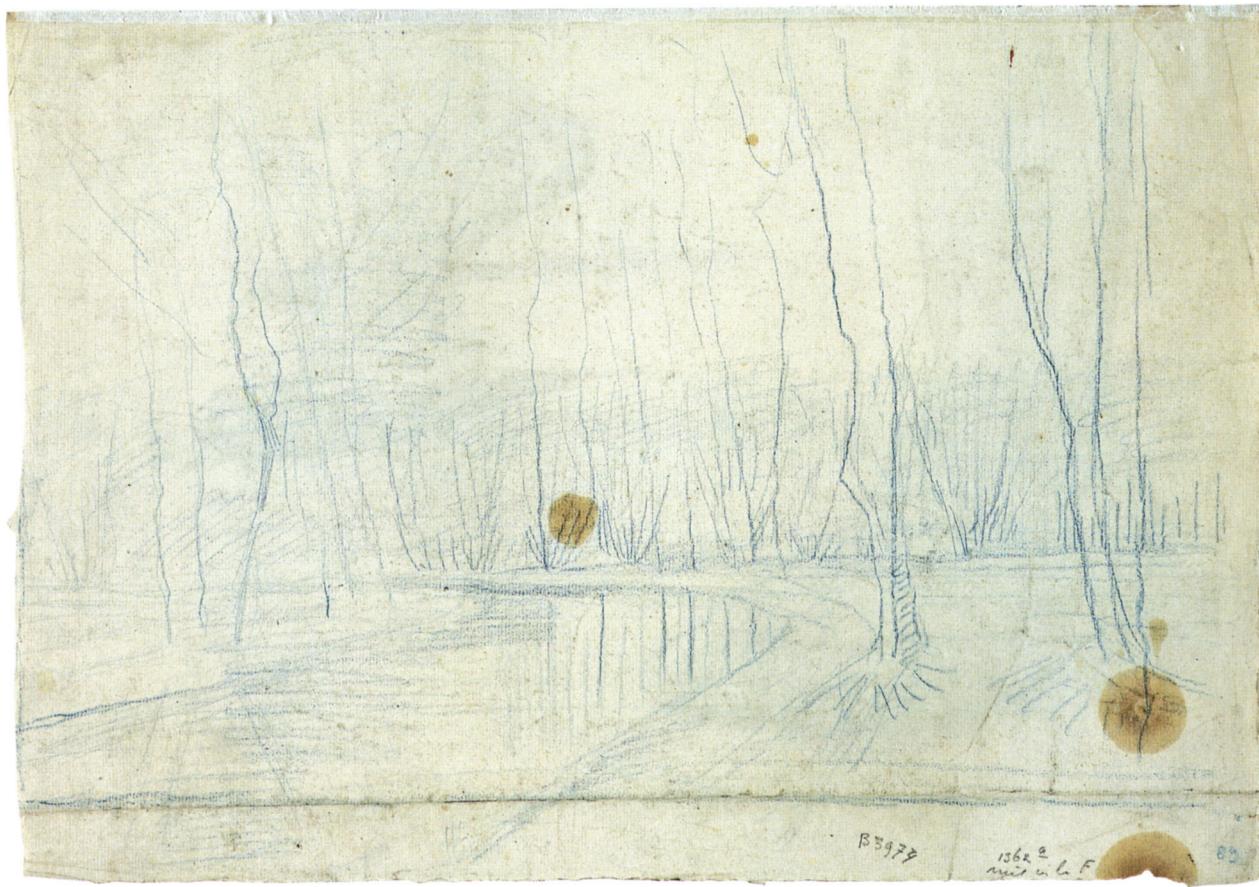
The absence of landmarks makes it impossible to identify the location. Written on the back of *Park with figures* in Van Gogh's hand is the annotation 'adju DeGourlet conservation Jardin Tuillerie Inspecteur Elysée' (fig. 274b).<sup>2</sup> It is not known why he wrote this down, or whether it has anything to do with the drawing.



274b Reverse of cat. 274.



274 Park with figures



275 Park view

B397B

1362 2  
new in L F

82

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274 Park with figures

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Pencil on thin cardboard  
6.1 x 10.5 cm  
Unsigned  
Inv. d 126 V/1969  
F 1382r JH 1027

Amsterdam 1987, p. 432,  
no. 2.391; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 455, vol. 2, pl. CCLI;  
Heenk 1995, p. 146; Hulsker  
1996, p. 224.

EXHIBITIONS  
None.

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-69  
V.W. van Gogh; 1969 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1969-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 120,  
vol. 4, pl. CXL; De la Faille 1970,  
pp. 486, 661; Amsterdam 1987,  
p. 433, no. 2.392; De la Faille  
1992, vol. 1, pp. 120, 359, vol. 2,  
pl. CXL; Heenk 1995, pp. 146, 158;  
Hulsker 1996, p. 224.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

275 Park view

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Blue chalk on laid paper  
32.1 x 46.3 cm  
Watermark: Lalanne  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 250

Inv. d 156 V/1962  
SD 1703v JH 1026

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 581, 672;

## 276-286 Studies of plaster casts

Van Gogh continued the work he had done at Cormon's studio by working from plaster casts back at home in the rue Lepic, making no fewer than 11 paintings and 11 drawings of them.<sup>1</sup> The drawings differ from those done at Cormon's in their freer style, more varied drawing materials, smaller size and the casts themselves.

It is not known how many casts Van Gogh had in his collection. It was not difficult to get hold of them at the time he was living in Paris. They were produced by large state institutions like the Louvre and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and by numerous private casting workshops,<sup>2</sup> and were sold for very little in shops and by street hawkers. The 22 studies which Van Gogh made at home are of eight casts, four of which have survived: a kneeling, flayed figure (fig. 276a), Michelangelo's *Dying slave* (fig. 276b), a horse and a seated female torso. All of them are now in the collection of the Van Gogh Museum.<sup>3</sup> The kneeling flayed figure was the subject of both a drawing and a painting, the *Dying slave* of a drawing, and the horse and the female torso of paintings alone.<sup>4</sup>

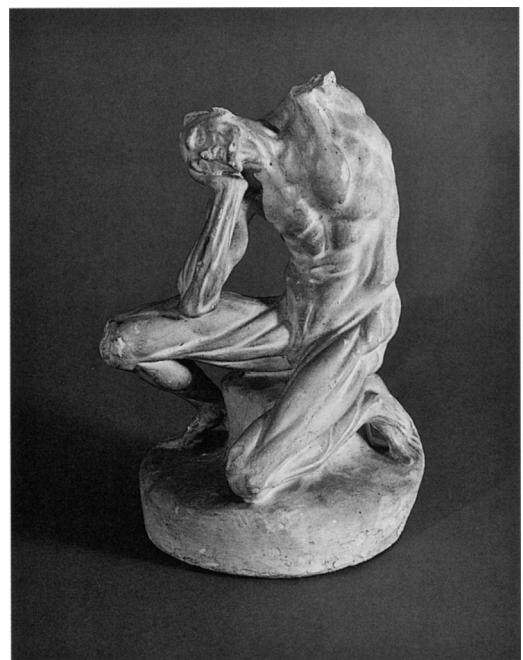
The other four casts, all of which feature in drawings, were two torsos of Venus, a male torso, and Michelangelo's *Young slave*. All are now lost.<sup>5</sup> Paintings which he made after three of them show that they were indeed part of his collection and not Cormon's. The bright palette and stripy manner of some of them date from after his period of study with Cormon. There is no painting after Michelangelo's *Young slave*, but it is nevertheless included with this group on the evidence of the sketchy style of drawing, the size of the sheet and the lack of any connection with the drawings made at Cormon's studio.

The casts which Van Gogh drew at Cormon's were mainly of classical statues, while three of the six which he owned himself and studied in his drawings were of Renaissance sculptures. In addition to the two by Michelangelo (1475-1564) – the *Dying slave* (fig. 276c) and *Young slave* (fig. 276d) – there was the *Kneeling écorché* (fig. 276e).<sup>6</sup> It is not entirely clear who the sculptor was, with some authors attributing it to Bartolommeo Bandinelli (1493-1560) and others to Michelangelo.<sup>7</sup>

Only one of the three classical torsos which Van Gogh drew at home has been identified: the Venus which features in five of the drawings

<sup>1</sup> The paintings are F 216 JH 1348, F 216a JH 1054, F 216b JH 1060, F 216c JH 1082, F 216d JH 1071, F 216e JH 1078, F 216f JH 1076, F 216g JH 1055, F 216h JH 1058, F 216i JH 1072 and F 216j JH 1059.

<sup>2</sup> There were 268 private casting workshops in Paris in the second half of the 19th century. See Florence Rionnet, L'Atelier de moulage du musée du Louvre (1794-1928), Paris 1996, Appendix 9, pp. 376-80.



276a Plaster cast of the *Kneeling écorché*, 19th century. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

3 Inv. v 35 V/1978, v 51 V/1981, v 36 V/1978 and v 50 V/1981 respectively.

4 Cat. 285, F 216f JH 1076, cat. 283, F 216c JH 1082 and F 216 JH 1348 respectively.

5 They are depicted in cats. 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 284 and 286. Heenk 1995, p. 147, lists the casts which Van Gogh must have had at home.

Michelangelo's Young slave is missing, but she does mention the Venus de Milo. In her discussion on pp. 147-49 she speaks of the former but not of the latter, so there is probably an error in the list.

6 The marble original of the Dying slave was originally part of the design for the tomb of Pope Julius II in S. Pietro in Vincoli in Rome. The original of the Young slave, which is also a marble, was blocked out in 1516-30 for the Medici Chapel in Florence.

7 Heenk 1995, p. 148 (note 1), suggests a third possibility, namely that the Ecorthé was made by an unknown artist who had studied Michelangelo's nude athletes for the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and the classical Belvedere torso. The original is in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

8 Cats. 276, 277, 278, 279 and 280. The marble original of the 1st-2nd century BC is in the British Museum in London. The identification is from Heenk 1995, p. 148.

9 Cats. 252, 258, 260, 261, 264-266.

10 Those connections are detailed below.

11 This was not the only time that Van Gogh sketched a small landscape on another drawing; see cat. 306 and Appendix 2, no. 2.5 (fig. 276i).

(fig. 276f).<sup>8</sup> The torso, the thighs of which are mounted on a broad base, is very similar to the Venus which Van Gogh drew many times at Cormon's studio.<sup>9</sup> There, however, the goddess stands on just one leg with the other leg extended forward. It seems that both casts were made from the same sculpture, with the differences in the base, positioning and finish probably being due to their manufacture in two separate casting workshops. It is not possible to isolate a single original for each of the other two torsos. The one of Venus in cats. 281 and 286 is missing the left leg and stands with the right thigh on a hemispherical base. The pose of the muscular male torso calls to mind that of a discus thrower (cat. 284).

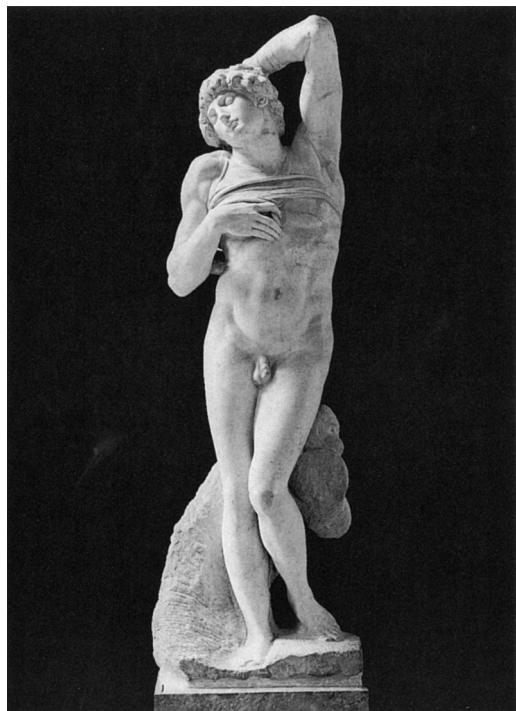
It is difficult to date the studies of plaster casts made in the apartment in the rue Lepic any more closely than 1887, the year following Van Gogh's time in Cormon's studio. The style, drawing materials and paper rarely provide any further clues, and when a connection can be made with other works it turns out that they, too, are impossible to date accurately.<sup>10</sup> It was therefore decided to discuss these cast studies as a single group and assign them simply to 1887. Occasionally a suggestion is made for a more specific dating.

Van Gogh made five studies on three sheets of the *Torso of Venus*, a cast after the original in London, viewing it from a slightly different angle each time. Three of them, cats. 276, 277 and 278, look like quick sketches. The initial draft lines indicate that Van Gogh turned the cast while he was still drawing it. It is not clear what he was studying in these drawings, the outlines or the modelling. All three are in black chalk, that used for cat. 277 having a brown tinge. The sheet with cat. 278 was also used for a small, framed landscape.<sup>11</sup> Executed with the pen in black and blue inks, it shows a windmill on a hill, a gateway and a few figures. The ink was washed with the brush here and there, making it run and blurring some of the details. That, together with iron-gall ink corrosion, makes the drawing difficult to interpret. Given the windmill and the rustic nature of the scene it would appear to be a view of Montmartre. The proportions suggest that it was a design for a painting, although no comparable composition is known.

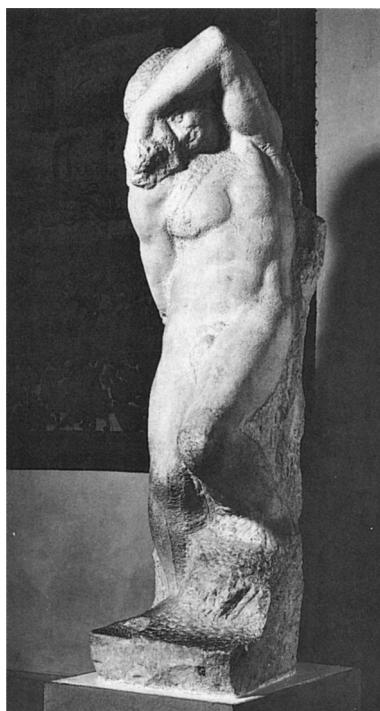
The other two studies of the same torso, cats. 279 and 280, are more worked up than the previous three and are both set against a dark background. They were executed with the same black chalk with a brownish tinge. In cat. 279, with the landscape on the verso showing through on the right, Van Gogh drew the contours and the background with broad, stumped lines, using very delicate lines for the shaded passages in the body.



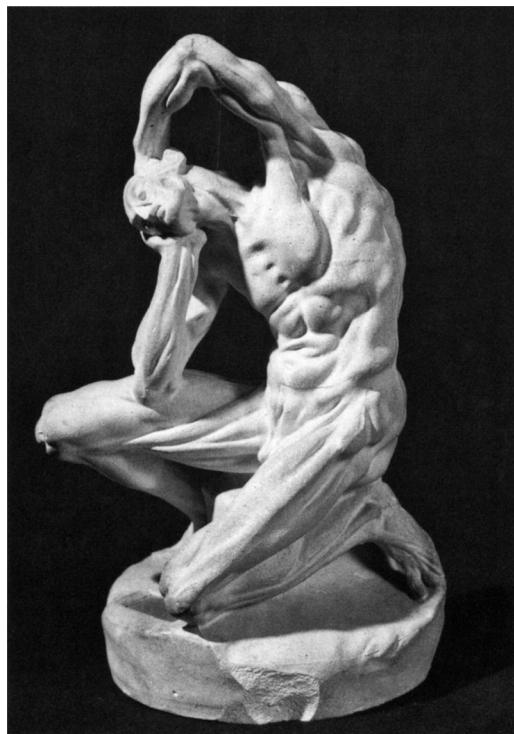
276b Plaster cast of the Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Dying slave*, 19th century.  
Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



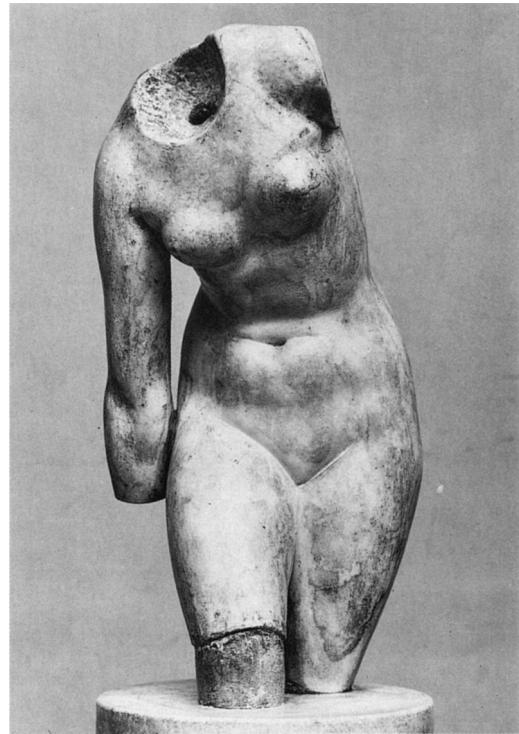
276c Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Dying slave*, 1513. Paris, Musée du Louvre.



276d Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Young slave*, 1516-30. Florence, Galleria dell'Accademia.



276e *Kneeling écorché*, 15th century.  
Paris, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des  
Beaux-Arts.



276f *Torso of Venus*, 1st-2nd century BC.  
London, British Museum.

<sup>12</sup> Arnold 1980 II, p. 2187.

<sup>13</sup> Heenk 1995, p. 148.

The modelling of the other *Torso of Venus* (cat. 280) consists of parallel hatching and areas of stumping. As with some of the Cormon studies, the dark background is a combination of close-packed horizontal hatching and lines which follow the outlines of the cast.

The five *Torso of Venus* studies display similarities in style, drawing materials and dimensions, so it is safe to say that they were all made within a short space of time, and since the two studies with dark backgrounds recall some of the cast studies made at Cormon's it is possible they were made soon after that period.

The worked-up drawing in black chalk after Van Gogh's second cast of Venus (cat. 281) could also date from around then, for it has a similar background and the modelling consists of delicate hatchings and stumped passages. Van Gogh reinforced the contours with lithographic crayon, which he also used for the lines to the left of the base.

On the back of that sheet are two drawings in black chalk: on the left a study of Michelangelo's *Young slave* and on the right a free, female version of it. The study of the sculpture deviates from the original, which is still partially embedded in the block of marble (fig. 276d). It is very possible that Van Gogh freed the slave from the stone in order to get a better idea of its pose, which he needed for the humanised variant on the right. Arnold attributes the difference in proportions to a changed angle of view, which is odd because both sketches appear to be drawn from an almost identical standpoint.<sup>12</sup> Heenk suggests that the differences are due to Van Gogh making the sketches quickly and from memory.<sup>13</sup> Just why he would want to make a drawing after a plaster cast from memory is not explained.

Michelangelo's *Dying slave* is on a sheet that also has a sketch of a group of people around a table (cat. 283). The cast study was laid down with short pencilled lines which make the figure look rather angular. Van Gogh then worked over the pencil lines in the upper half of the body with the pen in a dark blue ink. The angle of the head and the positions of the right arm and hand differ from the sculpture slightly. The right lower leg has a hairy look as a result of Van Gogh replacing the vertical contour with hatching diagonal to that imaginary outline. He did the same, but even more emphatically, in cats. 300, 301, 302, 303 and 306. It is a device which is related to the Impressionist and Neo-impressionist painting style which Van Gogh was trying to master in the first half of 1887 (see also cat. 306).

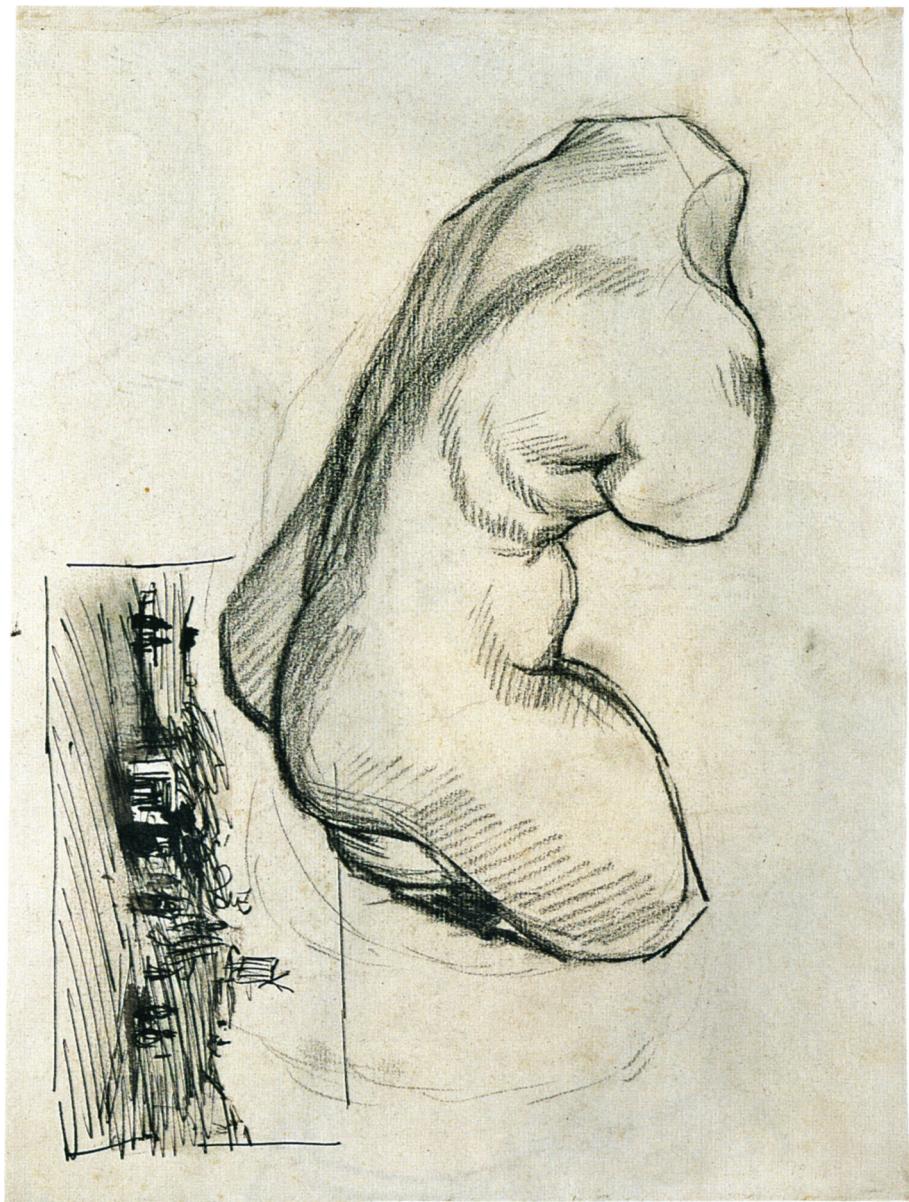
After drawing the study of the cast Van Gogh turned the paper through 90 degrees and sketched a group of people at table with firm



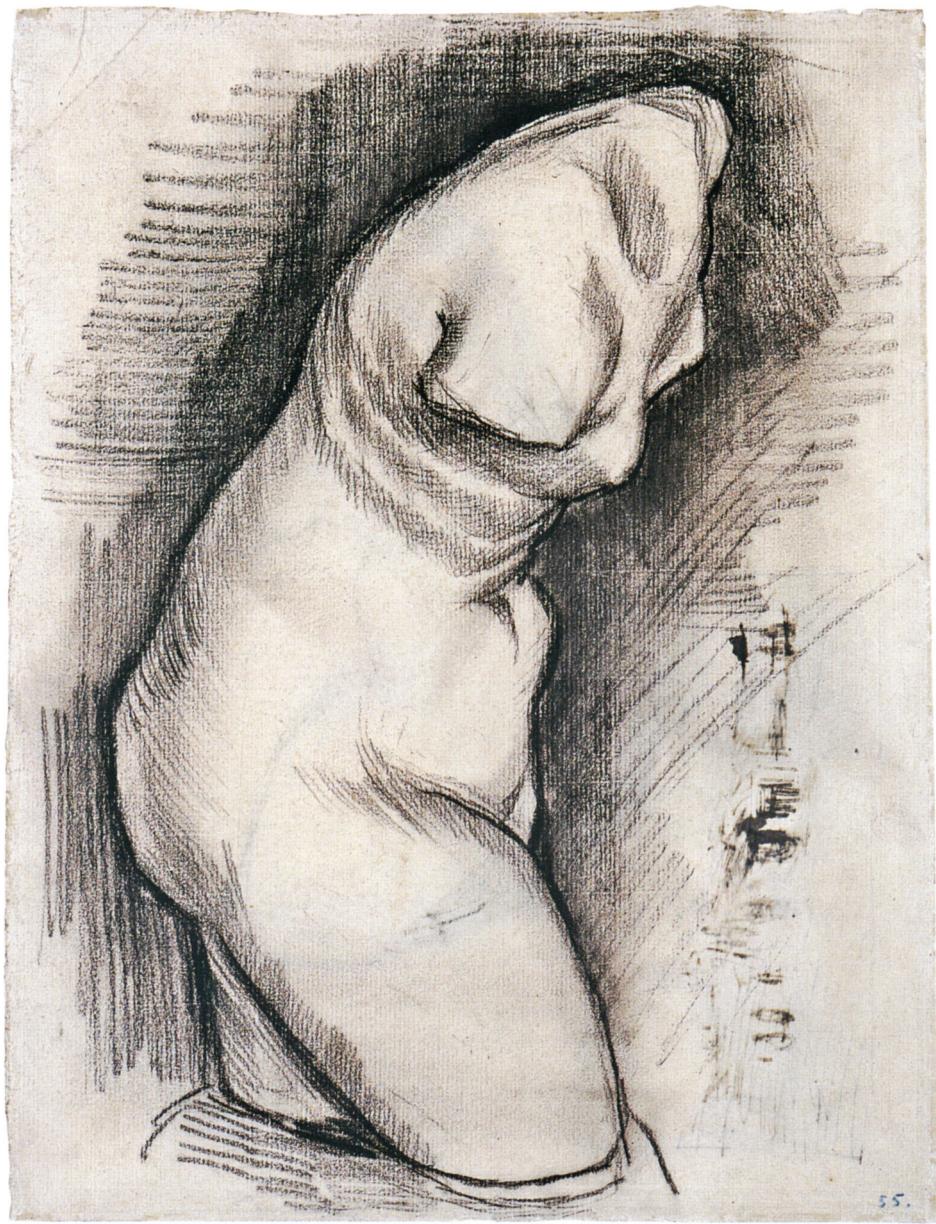
276 Torso of Venus



277 Torso of Venus



278 Torso of and a landscape

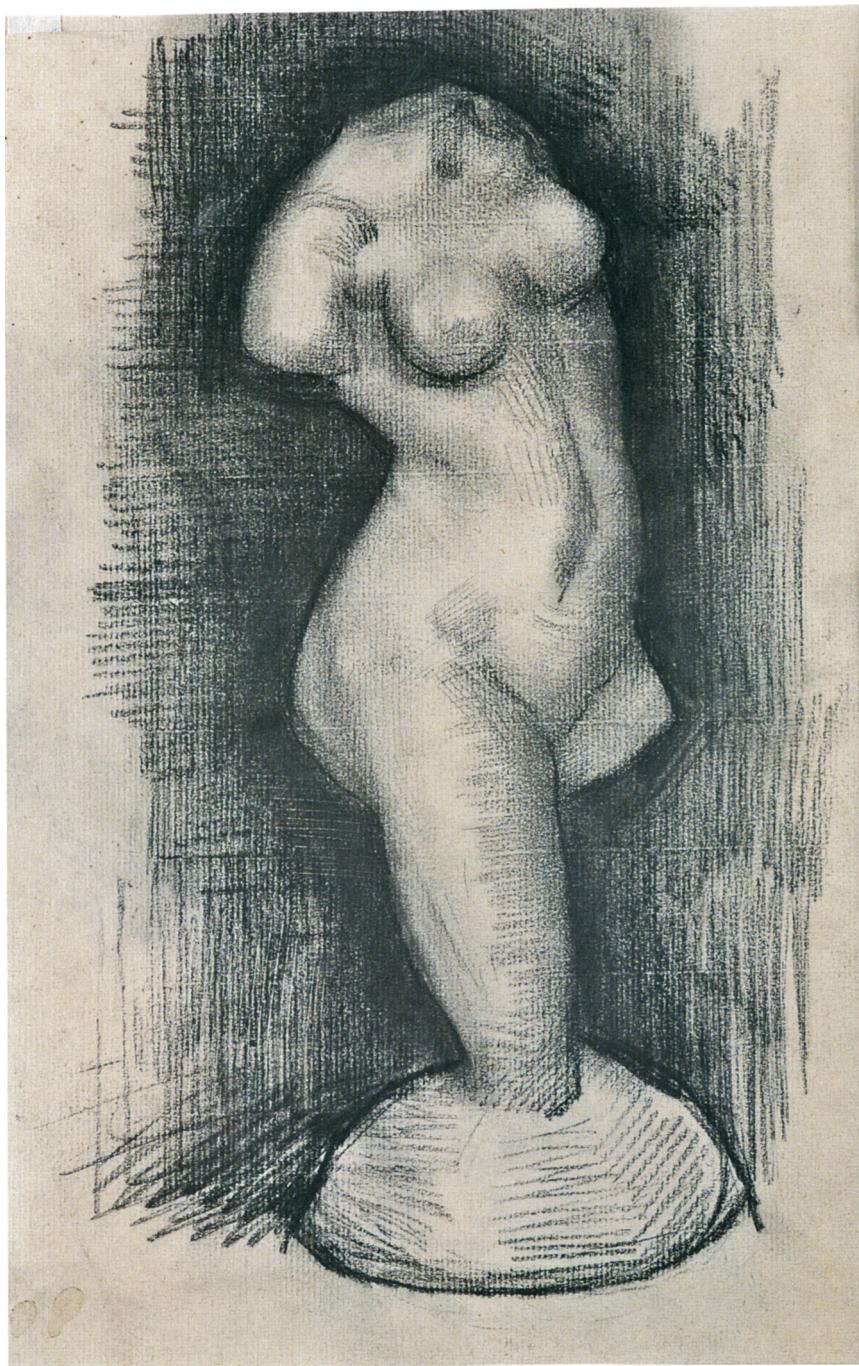


279 Torso of Venus



280 Torso of Venus

5\*2



281 Torso of Venus



282 Young slave



283 Dying slave and figures at a table

pencilled lines and framed it with blue chalk, which he also used to outline some of the heads. Only the central figure of the three looking out at the viewer has a face, and it is also the only one holding something, possibly cutlery or a glass. The man on the left is wearing a hat, and two bottles stand on the table beside him. The scratchy style of drawing, the blue chalk and the pale grey of the wove paper connect this small sketch to Van Gogh's series of studies of musicians (see *cats. 293-297*). The style of that series, the precise date of which is uncertain, is related to the diagonally hatched contours of the *Dying slave*.<sup>14</sup> In other words, the two drawings on this sheet were made in the same period, the first quarter of 1887.

Heenk has suggested that Van Gogh made the drawing of the slave in the restaurant where he drew the company at table.<sup>15</sup> Neither the drawing style nor the materials support this. The sheet was originally part of a drawing pad, so it is perfectly possible that Van Gogh simply rotated a sheet which he had drawn at home to record the people at the table. It is possible that this was a swift sketch for a drawing of the interior of a restaurant executed at the beginning of 1887, which Hartrick described as a narrow room with a long table occupied by a group of diners.<sup>16</sup>

The sheet on which Van Gogh drew a male torso also has a second study unrelated to the cast (*cat. 284*). It is of a seated women wearing a skirt, a blouse with a V-shaped neck and a scarf, with her hands in her lap. In her dress and pose she is very similar to the *Portrait of a woman with flowers* (fig. 276g), for which this was very probably a preliminary study. The painting is generally dated to the winter of 1887-88 on the evidence of the style and use of colour, so it is only logical to place the drawing in the same period. It is impossible to say whether the well-observed male torso was also made then, although both drawings are in the same black chalk.

Van Gogh drew the *Kneeling écorché* (*cat. 285*) in pencil which he then went over with the pen in brown ink, mainly in the contours. That was an odd thing to do with an *écorché*, the point of the exercise usually being to depict the anatomy. Here, though, the muscles are only sketchily described with the pencil. One possible explanation for this is that the drawing was a preliminary study for the painting which Van Gogh made of the cast (fig. 276h). There the figure is set against a dark background, so he had to get the contours right. The similarity in the angle of view between the drawing and the painting is another argument for regarding the sketch as a preliminary study.

The *Torso of Venus* which Van Gogh reproduced in *cat. 281* was also drawn in one of his sketchbooks (*cat. 286*). It was torn out, and with the

<sup>14</sup> See *cats. 293-297* and 306.

<sup>15</sup> Heenk 1995, p. 147.

<sup>16</sup> Hartrick 1939, pp. 51-52. See *cat. 288* for his account.



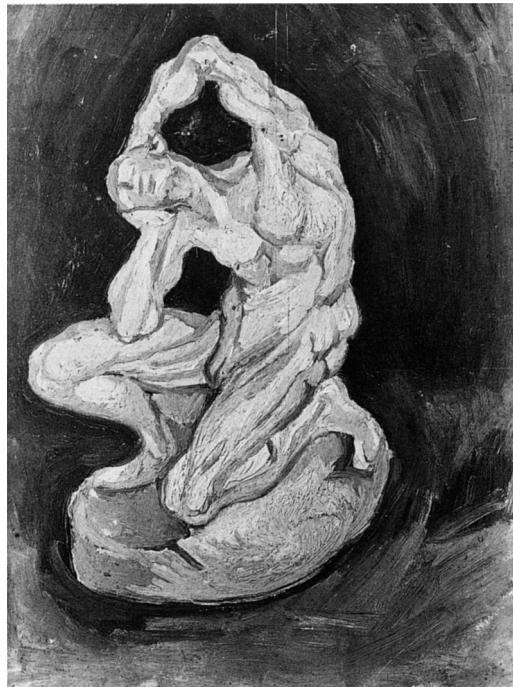
276g *Portrait of a woman with flowers*  
(F 381 JH 1355), 1887-88. Paris, Musée d'Orsay.

<sup>17</sup> Van der Wolk 1987, p. 142, assigns both sheets to Sketchbook 5.

<sup>18</sup> Van Gogh usually worked on full or half sheets at Cormon's. See cats. 251-271.

*Standing male nude seen from the front* (cat. 244) is all that remains of the book.<sup>17</sup> Van Gogh made a swift sketch of the cast in blue chalk, and later added some lines in a black chalk which he also used for the addresses and calculations he jotted down around the figure. At bottom right he repeated the cast in a rapid pencil sketch but seen from a different angle. The pencil lines in the blue chalk study are not in Van Gogh's hand, and may have been made by the person who went over the scene on the back of the sheet to produce a tracing which has always been wrongly attributed to Van Gogh (see Appendix 2, no. 25). The small framed sketch of a river landscape is by him, though.

The 11 studies of plaster casts which Van Gogh made at home are on seven sheets of paper, all very much the same size. The measurements of approximately 32.5 x 24.5 cm correspond to a quarter sheet, which is considerably smaller than the paper Van Gogh used in Cormon's studio.<sup>18</sup> Of the five sheets of laid paper, only the one with studies of the *Torso of Venus* on both sides (cats. 277 and 280) has a watermark: L.BERVILLE. The only other sheet with this watermark in Van Gogh's Paris œuvre has a study of



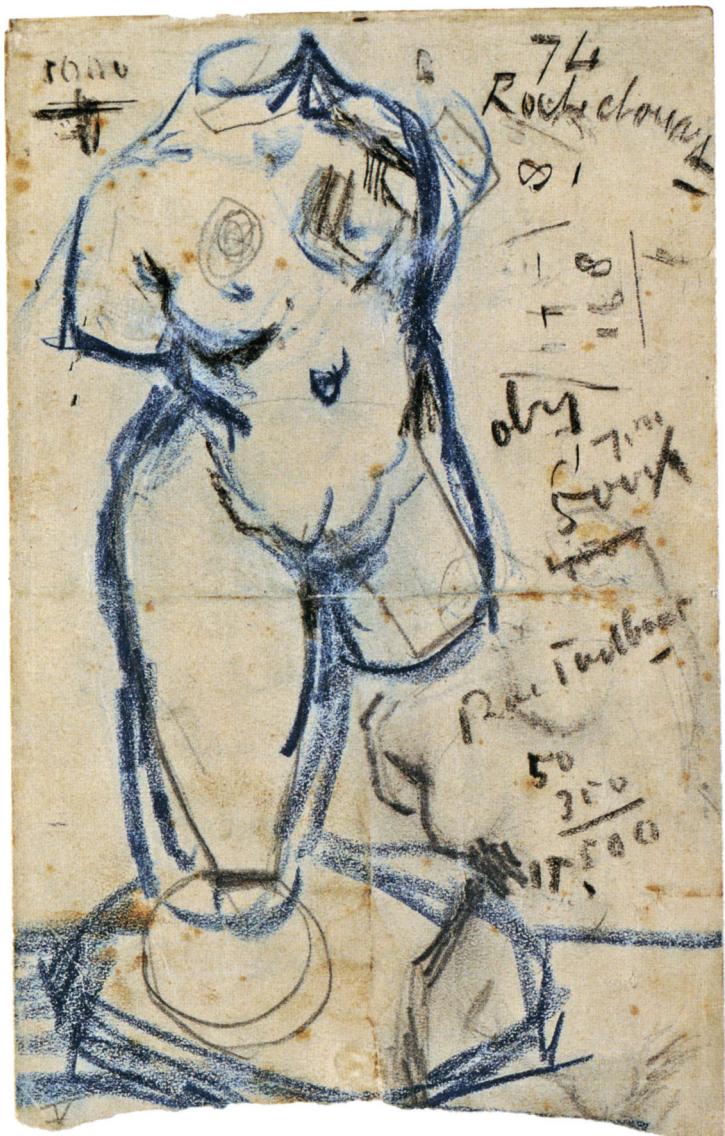
276<sup>h</sup> *Kneeling écorché* (F 216f JH 1076),  
1887. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



284 Male torso and Study for 'Portrait of a woman with flowers'



285 Kneeling écorché



286 Torso of Venus

19 Heenk 1995, p. 149.

20 They are F 216a JH 1054, F 216g JH 1055, F 216h JH 1058, F 216j JH 1059 and F 216b JH 1060.

21 They are F 216d JH 1071 and F 216i JH 1072. The small cast also features in a still life (F 360 JH 1349) which is usually dated to the second half of 1887.

22 The painting is F 216e JH 1078.

a plaster cast which he drew at Cormon's (cat. 258). Heenk believes that the two sheets with the other three studies of that torso (cats. 276, 278, 279) were also Berville paper,<sup>19</sup> but that can only be said for certain if a sheet actually has a watermark or if one of its sides fits up against another watermarked sheet. Neither is the case here.

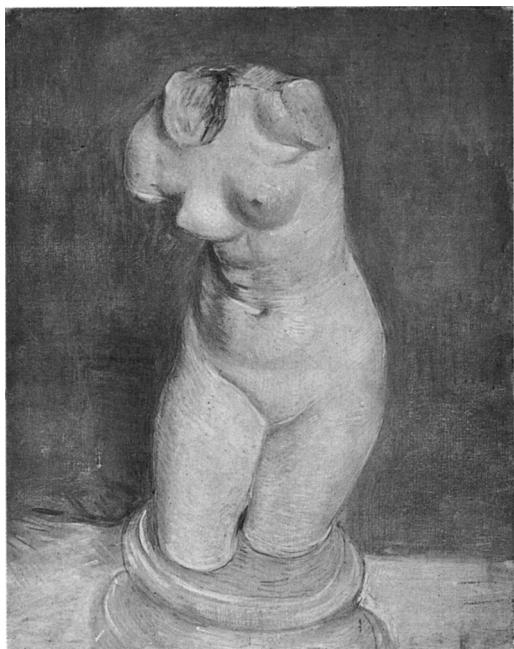
The only drawing in the group with a slightly different size is a *Torso of Venus* (cat. 286). As noted, it comes from a sketchbook. The pale grey, wove paper of *Dying slave and figures at a table* (cat. 283) is the same as that of the musicians series (see cats. 293-297). All of these sheets have three straight, cut edges and one torn edge with glue residues, from which it can be concluded that they originated from a single sketchbook.

Four of the casts in Van Gogh's collection are also the subjects of paintings. There are five painted studies of the torso of Venus standing with both legs on the base: two seen from the back and three from the front (fig. 276j).<sup>20</sup> Not one of them shows the cast from the same angle as



276i Appendix 2, no. 25.

in the drawings, so the latter were not intended as preliminary studies for the paintings. The same applies to the two oil studies which Van Gogh made of the other cast of Venus.<sup>21</sup> Regarding the male torso (*cat. 284 and fig. 276k*), he seems to have viewed the upper body from much the same position in both the painting and the drawing,<sup>22</sup> but the position of the legs shows that he drew the cast frontally but turned it a little to the right for the painting. In other words, this drawing is also an independent work and not a preliminary study. The *Kneeling écorché* (*cat. 285*) is therefore the only preparatory drawing for a painted version.



276j *Torso of Venus* (F 216h JH 1058),  
1887. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



276k *Male torso* (F 216e JH 1078), 1887.  
Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

276 Torso of Venus

1887  
Black chalk on laid paper  
32.2 x 24.6 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 284  
Inv. d 138 V/1962  
SD 1713r JH 1061

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 583, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 439,  
no. 2.431; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 457, vol. 2, pl. CCLIII;  
Heenk 1995, p. 149; Hulsker  
1996, p. 230.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

277 Torso of Venus

1887  
Black chalk with a brown tinge  
on laid paper  
31.7 x 24.6 cm  
Watermark: L.BERVILLE  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 280  
Inv. d 136 V/1962  
SD 1711v JH 1057

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 583, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 439,  
no. 2.431; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 457, vol. 2, pl. CCLIII;  
Heenk 1995, p. 149; Hulsker  
1996, p. 230.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

278 Torso of and  
a landscape

1887  
Black chalk, pen in black and  
blue ink, wash, on laid paper  
32.1 x 24.6 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 279  
Inv. d 137 V/1962  
SD 1712v JH 1053

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 583, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 439,  
no. 2.429; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, pp. 457, 458, vol. 2,  
pl. CCLIII; Heenk 1995, p. 149;  
Hulsker 1996, pp. 230, 232, 244.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

279 Torso of Venus

1887  
Black chalk with a brown tinge  
on laid paper  
32.1 x 24.6 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 278  
Inv. d 137 V/1962  
SD 1712r JH 1056

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 583, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 439,  
no. 2.430; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 457, vol. 2, pl. CCLIII;  
Heenk 1995, p. 149; Hulsker  
1996, p. 230.

EXHIBITION

1964 Zundert, no. 17.

280 Torso of Venus

1887  
Black chalk with a brown tinge  
on laid paper  
31.7 x 24.6 cm  
Watermark: L.BERVILLE  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 277  
Inv. d 136 V/1962  
SD 1711r JH 1062

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 582, 583,  
672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 439,  
no. 2.433; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 457, vol. 2, pl. CCLIII;  
Heenk 1995, p. 149; Hulsker  
1996, pp. 230, 231.

EXHIBITION

1964 Zundert, no. 18.

## 281 Torso of Venus

1887

Black chalk, black lithographic crayon, on laid paper

32.2 x 24.9 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 282

Inv. d 34 V/1962

F 1363cr JH 1070

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62

V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 478, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 438, no. 2.422; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 351, 352, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXI; Heenk 1995, p. 148; Hulsker 1996, pp. 230, 232.

### EXHIBITIONS

None.

## 282 Young slave

1887

Black chalk, grey wash, on laid paper

32.2 x 24.9 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 281

Inv. d 34 V/1962

F 1363cv JH 1079

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 478, 660; Arnold 1980 II; Amsterdam 1987, p. 438, no. 2.423; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 352, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXI; Heenk 1995, p. 148; Hulsker 1996, p. 234.

### EXHIBITIONS

None.

## 283 Dying slave and figures at a table

1887

Pencil, pen in dark blue ink, blue chalk, on wove paper

34.8 x 25.8 cm

Unsigned

Inv. d 37 V/1962

F 1365 JH 1086

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 118, vol. 4, pl. CCXXXV; London 1962, p. 54, no. 37; De la Faille 1970, pp. 480, 660; Arnold 1980 II; Amsterdam 1987, p. 441, no. 2.444; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 118, 354, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXV; Heenk 1995, pp. 141, 147, 153; Hulsker 1996, pp. 232, 234, 235.

### EXHIBITION

1962 London, no. 37.

## 284 Male torso and Study for 'Portrait of a woman with flowers'

1887

Black chalk on laid paper

24.6 x 32.2 cm

### Unsigned

Verso of cat. 276

Inv. d 138 V/1962  
SD 1713v JH 1077

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 583, 672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 443, no. 2.453; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 458, vol. 2, pl. CCCLIV; Heenk 1995, p. 149; Hulsker 1996, pp. 232, 233.

### EXHIBITIONS

None.

## 285 Kneeling écorché

1887

Pencil, pen in brown ink, on laid paper

32.4 x 24.5 cm

Unsigned

Inv. d 35 V/1962

F 1363d JH 1075

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 478, 479, 660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 438, no. 2.424; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 352, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXI; Heenk 1995, p. 148; Hulsker 1996, pp. 232, 233.

### EXHIBITION

1988 Rome, no. 81.

## 286 Torso of Venus

1887

Blue and black chalk, pencil, on wove paper

20.8 x 13.0 cm

Unsigned

Verso of Appendix 2, no. 2.5

Inv. d 140 V/1962

SD 1716r JH 1073

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation (ratified in 1982); 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 584, 672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 442, no. 2.448; Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 142, 143; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 458, vol. 2, pl. CCCLII; Heenk 1995, p. 148; Hulsker 1996, pp. 230, 232, 233.

### EXHIBITIONS

None.

## 287 Nude woman squatting over a basin

1887

Pencil on wove paper

21.4 x 13.6 cm

Unsigned

Verso: menu of the Grand  
Bouillon-Restaurant Du Chalet

Inv. d 38 V/1962

F 1376 JH 1162

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation (ratified in  
1982); 1962-73 on loan to the  
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;  
1973 on permanent loan to the  
Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 119,  
vol. 4, pl. cxxxix; Anfray 1953;  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 484, 661;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 445,  
no. 2.464; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1,  
pp. 119, 357, vol. 2, pl. cxxxix;  
Heenk 1995, p. 155; Hulsker 1996,  
pp. 250, 252, 253.

### EXHIBITION

1962 London, no. 33.

Like the *Couple making love* (cat. 272), *Nude woman squatting over a basin* is a rarity in Van Gogh's œuvre, being an uncommonly intimate observation by his standards. It is not possible to say whether it was made in a brothel or that the woman is one with whom he may have had a relationship in Paris. There is little information on the latter point. It is known that he had a relationship with Agostina Segatori, the owner of the Café du Tambourin, and in a moment of candour in the late summer or autumn of 1887 he wrote to his sister Wil: 'As far as I myself am concerned, I still go on having the most impossible, and not very seemly, love affairs, from which I emerge as a rule damaged and shamed and nothing else'. Apart from that one remark there is nothing to go on.

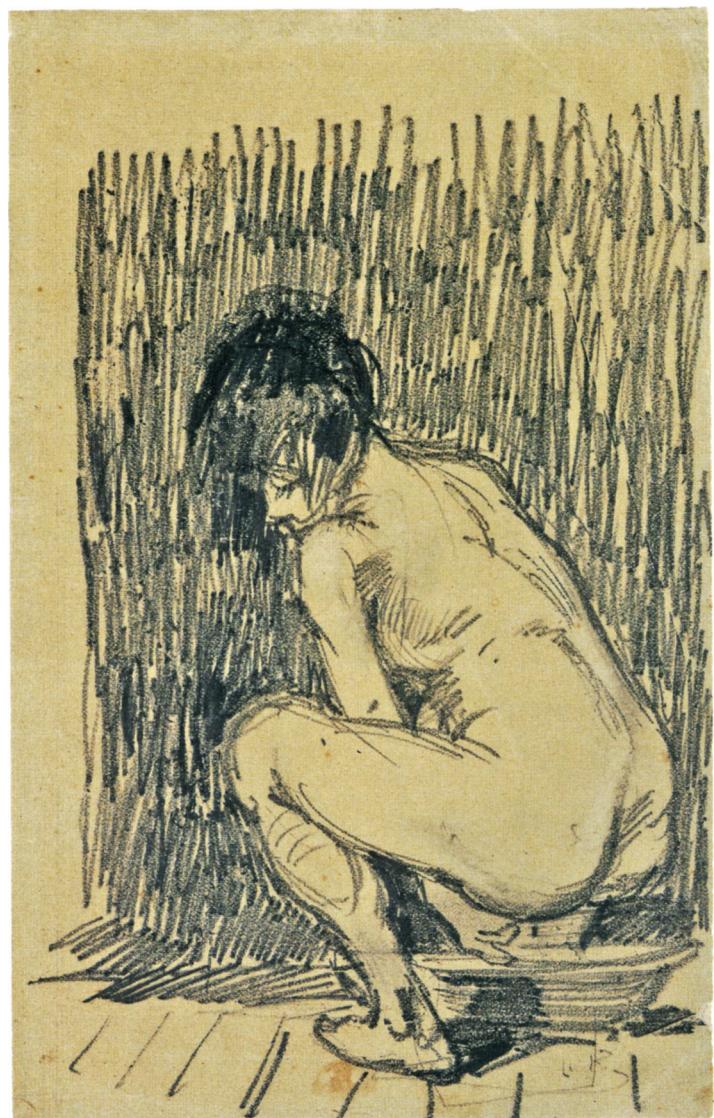
Van Gogh may have got the idea for the subject after seeing the work of Edgar Degas, one of whose recurring themes since the 1870s was women washing themselves at a basin or in a bath. Van Gogh could have seen such works at the eighth Impressionist exhibition held from 15 May to 15 June 1886, at which there were several pastels by Degas of 'femmes se baignant, se lavant, se séchant'.<sup>1</sup> In 1888, Emile Bernard gave Van Gogh a series of drawings made in a brothel which includes scenes reminiscent of this one (fig. 287a), and was himself probably inspired by the older Impressionist master.<sup>2</sup> This similarity led Louis Anfray to suggest in 1953 that this *Nude woman squatting over a basin* was also by Bernard and was part of the brothel series.<sup>3</sup> De la Faille, who had attributed it to Van Gogh in his 1928 catalogue, came round to that view in his manuscript for the revised edition of his book. Stylistically, though, this realistic and spontaneous drawing is far removed from Bernard's mannered draughtsmanship, and the editors of the 1970 edition of De la Faille retained the earlier attribution, as here. The remarkably free way in which the figure is sketched, however, does prompt some reservations. At bottom right are pencilled lines which appear to form the letters 'LP', but they are so thin and unobtrusive that they should almost certainly not be read as initials.<sup>4</sup>

This is one of four drawings which Van Gogh made on the backs of menus from the Grand Bouillon-Restaurant Du Chalet, to give that establishment at 43, avenue de Clichy its full name (fig. 287b).<sup>5</sup> A *bouillon* was the name given in the 16th century to a simple eating-house serving soup con-

<sup>1</sup> See Charles S. Moffett, *The new painting. Impressionism 1874-1886. Washington (National Gallery of Art) & San Francisco (The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco) 1986*, pp. 443, 444 and 452 and 453.

<sup>2</sup> See Welsh-Ovcharov 1988 for these drawings by Bernard, which are now in the Van Gogh Museum.

<sup>3</sup> Anfray 1953, pp. 10, 11.



287 Nude woman squatting over a basin

4 The letters 'LP' might be the initials of Van Gogh's friend Lucien Pissarro, but his style of drawing is very different.

5 The other works drawn on these menus are cats. 300, 321 and 322.

6 For the bouillon, Duval and the spread of his eating-houses see De grote Larousse van de gastronomie, 2 vols., Utrecht & Antwerp 1986, under the relevant headwords. See also Baedeker 1878, p. 17 ('Etablissements de bouillon').

7 See the Introduction for this exhibition.

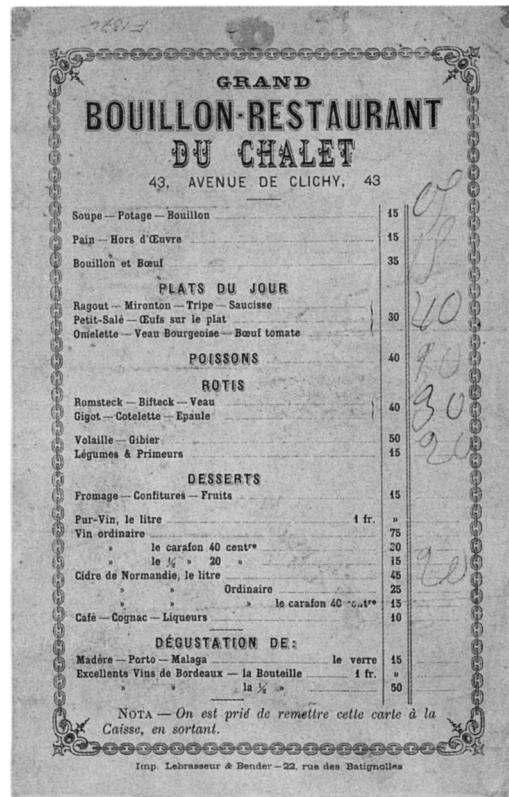
8 See letters 586/468, 594/473 and 623/500. For the Petit Boulevard see also Saint Louis 2001, *passim*.

taining pieces of meat. Pierre-Louis Duval (1811-1870), a butcher, opened the first in a chain of inexpensive *bouillons* in Paris which rapidly became very popular indeed. By the time of Van Gogh's arrival the *bouillon* had evolved into a type of eating-house serving a limited number of simple dishes at fixed, affordable prices. Unusually, though, waitresses were quite formally dressed. Customers were handed the printed menu on entering, and it was then marked with the cost of the orders. These were totted up at the end of the meal and the bill was paid at the cash desk, with the customer taking the menu with him if he wished.<sup>6</sup> It is impossible to make out what a diner had eaten, for an annotation of 40 centimes could refer to any one of the meat dishes. The total bill for this particular meal came to 1 franc 60 centimes.

Van Gogh was probably a regular customer at this restaurant, and was certainly on good terms with the manager, as he was allowed to exhibit there in November and December 1887, along with Seurat, Bernard, Anquetin, Signac, Gauguin and others.<sup>7</sup> Together they formed the group of avant-garde



287<sup>a</sup> Emile Bernard, *Prostitute squatting over a basin ('Y faut finir par où l'on commence')*, 1888. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



287<sup>b</sup> Reverse of cat. 287.

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painters whom Van Gogh later christened the artists of the Petit Boulevard (in contrast to the earlier generation of Impressionists, to whom he referred as the painters of the Grand Boulevard).<sup>8</sup>

It is impossible to put a date on this pencil drawing, because it is not known when Van Gogh began frequenting Du Chalet. Nor is the style any help. Apart from a few hesitant initial lines above the woman's back, the entire sketch was very swiftly executed. The background was filled with short vertical lines which are rare in Van Gogh's œuvre but recur in a comparable form in another drawing on a menu, *Woman pianist and a violinist* (cat. 300). That sheet probably dates from the first half of 1887. Since no precise date can be given to *Nude woman squatting over a basin*, the year 1887 will have to suffice.

The two horizontal creases in the paper were probably made when the menu was folded up and stuffed in a coat or trouser pocket on leaving the restaurant.

## 288 Window in the Bataille restaurant

FEBRUARY-MARCH 1887

Pen in brown (originally black) ink, blue, yellow, orange and white chalk, on laid paper which was originally blue-grey

54.0 x 39.8 cm

Signed at lower right: Vincent 87

Annotated at lower right: la fenêtre chez Bataille

Inv. d 350 V/1962

F 1392 JH 1218

#### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925 J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62 V.W. van Gogh; 1931-62 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

#### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 122, vol. 4, pl. cxlvii; Cooper 1955, p. 52; London 1968, p. 63, no. 75; Tralbaut 1969, p. 210; De la Faille 1970, pp. 488, 489, 661; Amsterdam 1987, p. 447, no. 2.478; Otterlo 1990, p. 207; Wadley 1991, pp. 268, 269; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 122, 361, vol. 2, pl. cxlvii; Heenk 1994, p. 37; Heenk 1995, pp. 141, 152, 243; Hulsker 1996, pp. 268-70.

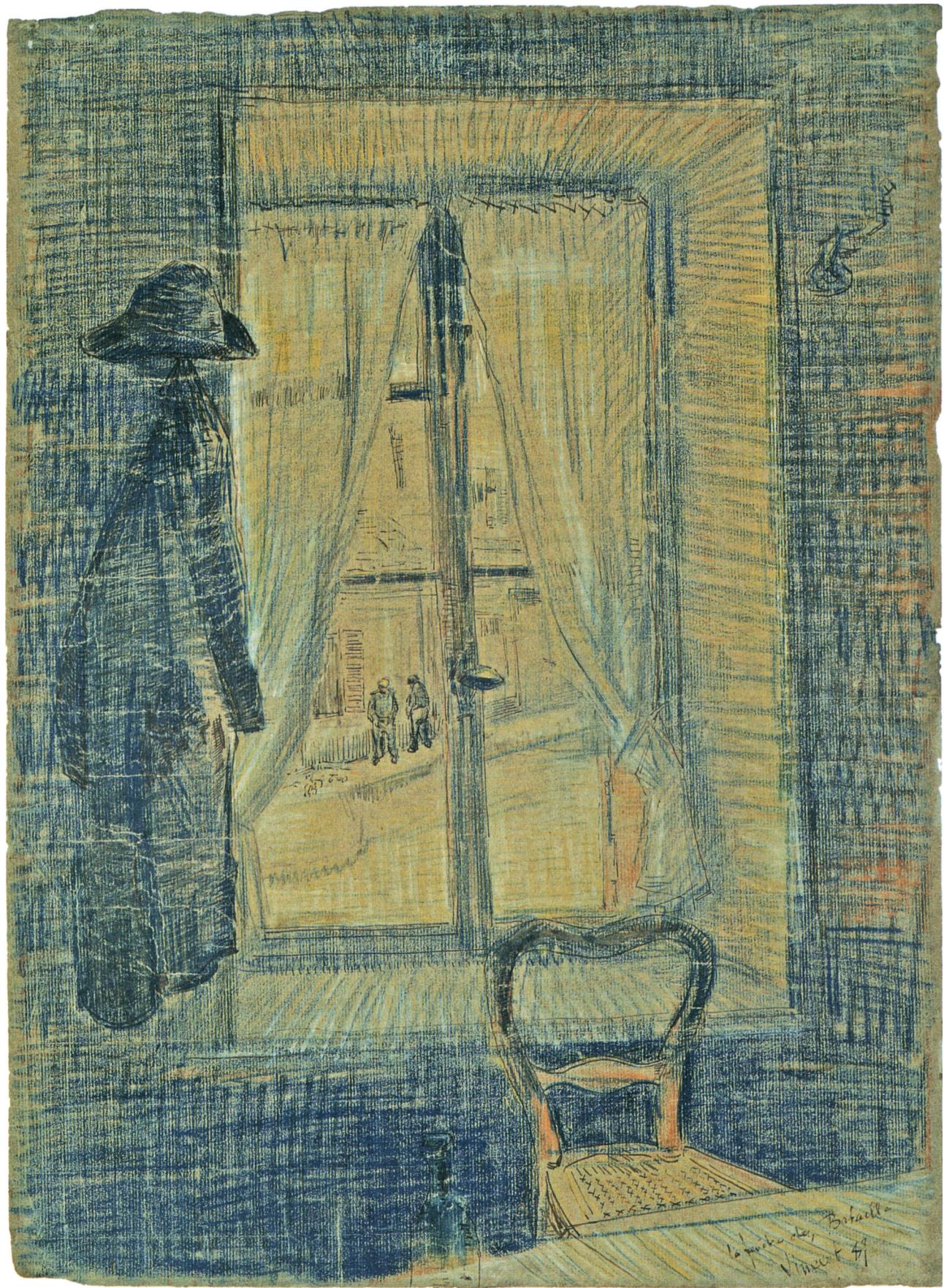
#### EXHIBITIONS

1897 Groningen, no cat. known; 1905 Amsterdam 1, no. 347 [Dfl. 175]; 1914-15 Amsterdam, no. 129; 1926 Munich, no. 2101 (not for sale); 1927-28 Berlin,

This drawing, which provides a glimpse out onto the street through a window in the Bataille restaurant, must have had a special significance for Van Gogh, for he annotated, signed and dated it in the bottom right corner, 'la fenêtre chez Bataille / Vincent 87', which makes it unique in his Paris œuvre. He ate at the restaurant quite regularly, and even organised an exhibition there of works by himself and his friends.<sup>1</sup> This is the sole dated drawing from the Paris period. The only other one with a signature is a sketch of man's head that he gave to Emile Bernard, which explains why he added his name (cats. 293-297, fig. 293b). *Woman walking her dog ('A La Villette')* (cat. 237) has an annotation but nothing more.

*Window in the Bataille restaurant* epitomises a subject which Van Gogh was very enthusiastic about at the time, as we learn from a reminiscence of Archibald Standish Hartrick,<sup>2</sup> who stated in his memoirs that the Dutchman visited him regularly in early 1887. In those days Van Gogh always went around with pieces of red and blue chalk in his pockets with which he made sketches to show his friends the subjects he was currently working on. One of those sketches stuck in Hartrick's memory. 'I recall the set-out of one such, depicting the scene in a restaurant he favoured at that time. It was a long, narrow room, with a narrow table, and seats against the wall, a tall window filling the end. In the foreground he showed some overcoats hanging up, then a line of eaters in perspective. Through the window, as he eagerly informed me, was a dung-heap and on it "un petit bonhomme qui pissoit [a little man peeing]". "Voilà!" he said. The design was certainly striking and, again, I wish I had kept it.'<sup>3</sup>

Hartrick's description partly matches the scene in this drawing. The most noticeable similarities are the interior of a restaurant, the coat and hat hanging in the foreground, the chair against the wall and, above all, the prosaic scene out on the street of two men, the one on the right seen from the back as he urinates against a wall while his companion, shown from the front, has just finished doing so and is buttoning his fly. As far as Hartrick's recollection is concerned, either Van Gogh treated the same subject in two different works, only one of which has survived, or Hartrick's memory was playing him tricks when he came to write his autobiography half a century after that particular meeting with Van Gogh. It is possible that he conflated two sepa-



288 Window in the Bataille restaurant

no. 55; 1928 Vienna & Hannover, no. 55; 1928 Paris, no. 55; 1929 Amsterdam, no. 41; 1929-30 Rotterdam, no. 29; 1931 Amsterdam, no. 184; 1932 Manchester, no. 63; 1945 Amsterdam, unnumbered; 1946 Stockholm, Gothenburg & Malmö, no. 31; 1946 Copenhagen, no. 31; 1946-47 Liège, Brussels & Mons, no. 41; 1947 Paris, no. 41; 1947 Geneva, no. 42; 1947 Basel, no. 148; 1947-48 London, Birmingham & Glasgow, no. 132; 1948 Bergen & Oslo, no. 81 and no. 82, respectively; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 235; 1953 The Hague, no. 52; 1953 Otterlo & Amsterdam, no. 91; 1953-54 Saint Louis, Philadelphia & Toledo, no. 86; 1954-55 Bern, no. 126; 1955 Antwerp, no. 230; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 129; 1956 Haarlem, no. 54; 1957 Nijmegen, no. 44; 1957-58 Stockholm, no. 52, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken & Gothenburg, no. cat. known; 1958-59 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland & Seattle, no. 115; 1960 Enschede, no. 31; 1960-61 Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg & Toronto, no. 118; 1961-62 Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo & Boston, no. 110; 1962-63 Pittsburgh, Detroit & Kansas City, no. 110; 1964 Zundert, no. 20; 1966 Paris & Albi, no. 34; 1967 Lille & Zürich, no. 36; 1967-68 Dallas, Philadelphia, Toledo & Ottawa, no. 33; 1968 Liège, no. 33; 1968-69 London, no. 75; 1971-72 Paris, no. 157; 1972-73 Strasbourg & Bern, no. 59; 1975 Malmö, no. 55; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 55; 1990 Otterlo, no. 155.

rate scenes, for there is a painting with several other elements from his story, *Interior of a restaurant* (fig. 288a): long tables and two rows of diners in a rather unobtrusive perspectival progression. Whatever the truth of the matter, the story does provide a slightly firmer date for the drawing, for even if Van Gogh sketched another work for Hartrick which has since perished, the drawing is obviously closely related to it and can be dated to the same period: early 1887.

Gustave Coquiot, an early chronicler of Van Gogh and an expert on life in Paris, knew many of the places of entertainment in Montmartre at first hand. He records that the Bataille restaurant, where according to him Vincent and Theo often ate their evening meal, opened in 1850 on the corner of the rue des Abbesses and the passage des Abbesses, and was run by a married couple, 'le père et la mère' Bataille. Written on the wall outside was 'Entrée des artistes'. The food was good and cheap. Coquiot mentions several artists who were also regular customers: Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Adolphe Willette, Norbert Goeneutte, Frederico Zandomeneghi 'et tant d'autres'. It is worth mentioning his passing remark that the restaurant consisted of several low, narrow rooms, which matches the description of the room which Van Gogh drew for Hartrick.<sup>4</sup>

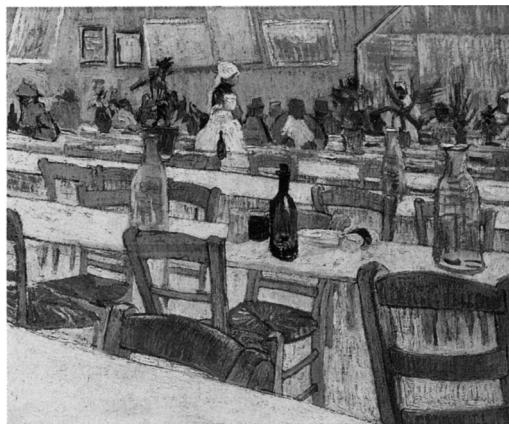
The subject of the drawing is not easily related to any other drawings by Van Gogh, for it is a combination of an interior and a street scene, as is a painting from the Paris period, *Glass of absinthe and a carafe* (fig. 288b). At the end of February 1888, shortly after arriving in Arles, Van Gogh painted the front of a pork butcher's shop seen through a window. These are the only works which so evidently combine the two genres found in *Window in the Bataille restaurant*.

The drawing is similar in style and technique to several other drawings, and it is more or less the key to their dating. The others in the group are *A guinguette* (cat. 289), *The boulevard de Clichy* (cat. 290), *View from the apartment in the rue Lepic* (cat. 291) and *Gardens on Montmartre and the Blute-fin windmill* (cat. 292). Another sheet which probably belongs to the group is *The Blute-fin windmill* in the Phillips Collection (cat. 292, fig. 292b).<sup>5</sup> With the exception of the *Window in the Bataille restaurant*, they are all views of parts of the city executed on sheets measuring approximately 39 x 54 cm. There is no uniformity in the main drawing materials used, but there are similarities between individual sheets which link the series together. *A guinguette* and *View from the apartment in the rue Lepic* are in pencil and pen, *The boulevard de Clichy* and the present drawing in pen and coloured chalks, and *Gardens on Montmartre and the Blute-fin windmill* in pencil and coloured chalks. Three of them – *Window in the Bataille restaurant*, *A guinguette* and *The boulevard de Clichy* – are on blue-grey laid paper which has lost much of its original colour.

Of those three, only the paper of the *Window in the Bataille restaurant* has retained some of that colour throughout; in the others it is only visible around the edges. Here too, though, the blue-grey has yellowed considerably, severely disrupting the colour balance. The strokes of blue chalk which are now so prominent would have been more in harmony with the original backing colour of the paper, making the scene more restful to the eye. The other coloured chalks – yellow, orange and white – would also have given a richer contrast.

The combination of coloured chalk and pen, and the pencil used solely for the small figures of the men across the street, was not a very successful one, and Van Gogh abandoned it after his experiments in this drawing and *The boulevard de Clichy*. The ink was used mainly for contours, for the street scene, and the coat and hat. It may have been blacker originally, making it stand out better. Now, though, the thin brown lines are swamped by the colourful cacophony of the chalk. The bottle on the table, for example, which is cut off by the bottom edge of the paper, and the coat-hook on the wall at top right, are barely visible. The problem is aggravated by the fact that Van Gogh worked with chalk over pen, some of which he scraped off the coat, slightly damaging the paper.

The reason for the lengthy inscription remains puzzling. As a rule it would indicate that Van Gogh thought he could sell the drawing, or intended giving it to someone as a present. The first seems unlikely because the scene looks a little too personal. It would only appeal to a buyer who knew the restaurant well and was amused by Van Gogh's slightly risqué little joke. The drawing was certainly not given away, unless it was to Theo, for it entered the museum with the family collection.



288a *Interior of a restaurant* (F 549 JH 1572).  
London, James Roundell Fine Art.

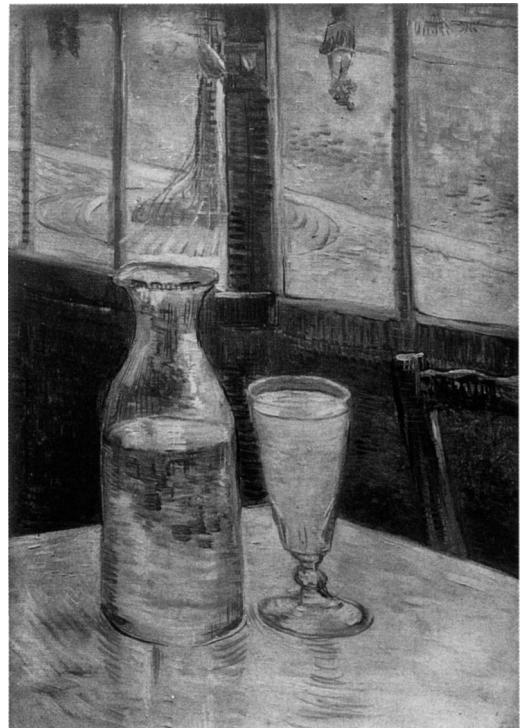
1 See the Introduction.

2 Jan Hulsker, in an unpublished communication preserved in the archives of the Van Gogh Museum, drew attention to Hartrick's anecdote and its consequences for the dating of the sheet.

3 Hartrick 1939, pp. 51, 52

4 Coquiot 1923, pp. 118, 119.

5 That drawing is in black ink and black chalk, but does display some stylistic similarities. However, we were unable to examine it, so it is mentioned here with the necessary reservations.



288b *Glass of absinthe and a carafe* (F 399 JH 1238). Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

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## 289 A guinguette

FEBRUARY-MARCH 1887

Pencil, pen and brush in black ink, white chalk, on laid paper which was originally blue-grey  
38.7 x 52.5 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 351 V/1962  
F 1407 JH 1034

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1931-62 on loan  
to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1962 Vincent van Gogh  
Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to  
the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to  
the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 126,  
vol. 4, pl. CXLIV; De Gruyter 1961,  
p. 103; London 1968, p. 58, no. 59;  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 492, 662;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 434,  
no. 2.402; Feilchenfeldt 1988,  
p. 130; Paris 1988, pp. 58, 59,  
no. 10; Richard 1988, pp. 20, 21;  
Otterlo 1990, p. 203; De la Faille  
1992, vol. 1, pp. 126, 365, vol. 2,  
pl. CXLIV; Heenk 1994, p. 37;  
Heenk 1995, pp. 152, 243; Hulsker  
1996, p. 226.

EXHIBITIONS  
1897 Groningen, no cat. known;  
1905 Amsterdam 1, no. 355  
[Dfl. 275]; 1906 Berlin, no. 56  
(DM 750); 1914-15 Amsterdam,  
no. 130; 1926 Amsterdam, no. 44;  
1927-28 Berlin, no. 45; 1928  
Vienna & Hannover, no. 45; 1928

Van Gogh added a new genre to his repertoire in Paris: depictions of people out enjoying themselves. He had already toyed with it in Antwerp (cats. 207-209), but it was only now that he started producing finished works in which cafés and restaurants are the main subject.

The Impressionists, led by Edouard Manet, had given the more light-hearted side of city life a permanent place in their œuvres. Theatre and cabaret, cafés and restaurants, parks and beaches had been a defining feature of modern art since the 1860s, and it remained so for Van Gogh's generation.

Van Gogh himself did not make many works of this kind, but they do form a fairly clear-cut group. Compared to the effervescent scenes of city life and entertainment familiar from the work of Manet, Renoir, Seurat, Toulouse-Lautrec and many others, Van Gogh's drawings and paintings are remarkably restrained. The few figures in them play secondary roles, and sometimes they are absent altogether (fig. 289a). This drawing, too, is a fairly sober depiction of a café terrace embellished with no more than a few unobtrusive figures seated at tables and two standing couples. There is a painting of the same subject in which the mood is a little more cheerful: the figures are more prominent, and the trees and vines are still fully in leaf, which is turning brown, identifying this as a snapshot of a fine autumn day (fig. 289b). The grey, autumnal look of the drawing owes much to the brownish yellow discolouration of the wood-pulp paper. The edges of the sheet show that it was once blue-grey, and in its original state, with the blue of the paper and the white highlights in the sky, it would have looked far fresher than it does now. The combination of the present drab colour of the paper and the spiky, bare trees unintentionally creates a sombre effect. The paper of *The boulevard de Clichy* (cat. 290), which dates from around the same time, has also lost its original colour, but that is offset somewhat by the use of coloured chalk.

A *guinguette* was a plain, working-class café, often with a dance-hall attached. Two candidates have been proposed for the one drawn and painted by Van Gogh, both of them within walking distance of his apartment. The first is the café and restaurant Au Franc Buveur, which stood on the corner of the rue des Saules and the rue St Rustique (fig. 289c).<sup>1</sup> Welsh-Ovcharov,



289 A guinguette

Paris, no. 47; 1929 Amsterdam, no. 46; 1929-30 Rotterdam, no. 33; 1930-31 Arnhem, Groningen, Leeuwarden & Enschede, no cat. known, no. 28, no cat. known, respectively; 1931 Amsterdam, no. 183; 1945 Amsterdam, unnumbered; 1946 Stockholm, Gothenburg & Malmö, no. 23; 1946 Copenhagen, no. 23; 1946-47 Liège, Brussels & Mons, no. 47; 1947 Paris, no. 48; 1947 Geneva, no. 49; 1947-48 London, Birmingham & Glasgow, no. 137; 1948 Bergen & Oslo, no. 86 and no. 87, respectively; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 241; 1949 Hengelo, no cat. known; 1949 Gouda, no cat. known; 1949-50 New York & Chicago, no. 65; 1951 Lyons & Grenoble, no. 87; 1951 Saint-Rémy, no. 87; 1953 Zürich, no. 67; 1953 The Hague, no. 56; 1953 Otterlo & Amsterdam, no. 90; 1953-54 Saint Louis, Philadelphia & Toledo, no. 84; 1955 Antwerp, no. 231; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 130; 1955-56 Liverpool, Manchester &

though, thinks that it is the *guinguette* of the Radet windmill, which was part of the Moulin de la Galette complex (fig. 289d).<sup>2</sup> There are indeed points of resemblance with the latter. On the left of the photograph, for instance, there is a slender chimney resembling the one in the centre of the drawing. Welsh-Ovcharov also says that the steps leading up to the mill are identical to those in Van Gogh's composition. That, though, is not true, for the staircase in the photograph is clearly open, while in the drawing there are risers behind the treads. There was a similar *guinguette* beside the Blute-fin windmill, but there too the steps were closed at the back (fig. 289e). The only conclusion, then, is that neither of the proposed locations are really appropriate.

A *guinguette* belongs to a group of large, drawn views of corners of the city, and is perhaps even the first in the series. Van Gogh felt that they were saleable, and was pursuing a plan he had conceived in Antwerp (see cats. 212-216). The series has always been dated to 1886, which Hulsker actually narrows down to the spring of that year. De la Faille places it in October, Welsh-Ovcharov around November on the evidence of the painting, which is clearly an autumnal scene, almost certainly from 1886.<sup>3</sup> She did establish a technical connection with three other sheets, which she dates to early 1887: *The boulevard de Clichy* (cat. 290), *Gardens on Montmartre and the Blute-fin windmill* (cat. 292) and *De La Sirène restaurant at Asnières* (cat. 313).

Technically the sheet is indeed related to the first two (see cat. 288), making it part of a larger group of drawings which contain various clues for



289a Interior of restaurant (F 342  
JH 1256), 1887. Otterlo, Kröller-Müller  
Museum.



289b Terrace of a café (*La guinguette*)  
(F 238 JH 1178), 1886. Paris, Musée  
d'Orsay.

their dating. *A guinguette* itself offers no clear-cut answer. The combination of completely bare trees and weather that permits people to sit out of doors, albeit well wrapped up, could point just as well to the late autumn of 1886 as to the early spring of 1887. The latter is the more likely, for the date of this and two other sheets (cats. 290 and 292) can be fixed approximately by the only dated drawing from Van Gogh's Paris period, namely the *Window in the Bataille restaurant* (cat. 288), which is dated '87' at lower right. It can be deduced that it was made early in the year from an anecdote recounted by Archibald Hartrick, as explained in that entry.

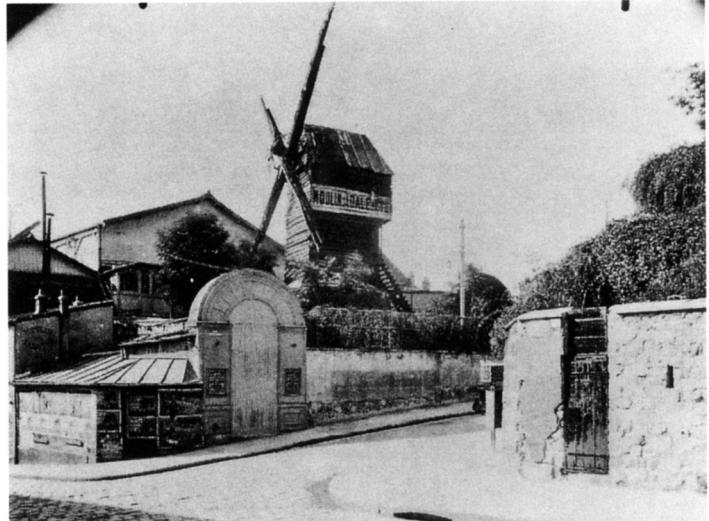
Although Van Gogh used coloured chalks in *Window in the Bataille restaurant* and did not in *A guinguette*, there are close correspondences between them. He used the pen in both drawings to add rapid, even hasty details to key elements, but it is not the dominant medium. Although not identical, the paper is very similar in colour and size.

*A guinguette* is a little smaller than the other three sheets in the group and the *Window in the Bataille restaurant*. It was trimmed on the right, the left and at the top after it had been finished, but it is impossible to say whether that was done by Van Gogh. The bottom edge is torn, possibly when the sheet was removed from the drawing pad. To the right of the lamppost and by the truncated legs of the table along that edge are two narrow strips of emerald-green paper which were there when the drawing was made, for the ink lies on top of them. It probably extended in a strip across the full

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, no. 101;  
1957 Breda, no. 44; 1957  
Marseilles, no. 38; 1957-58  
Stockholm, no. 48, Luleå, Kiruna,  
Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken &  
Gothenburg, no cat. known;  
1958-59 San Francisco, Los  
Angeles, Portland & Seattle,  
no. 117; 1959-60 Utrecht, no. 76;  
1960 Enschede, no. 34; 1961-62  
Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo &  
Boston, no. 114; 1962-63  
Pittsburgh, Detroit & Kansas  
City, no. 114; 1963 Sheffield,  
no. 18; 1963 Humlebaek, no. 91;  
1964 Washington & New York,  
no. 91; 1965 Charleroi & Ghent,  
no. 58; 1966 Paris & Albi, no. 38;  
1967 Lille & Zürich, no. 40;  
1967-68 Dallas, Philadelphia,  
Toledo & Ottawa, no. 37; 1968  
Liège, no. 37; 1968-69 London,  
no. 59; 1969 Humlebaek, no. 17;  
1969-70 Los Angeles, Saint  
Louis, Philadelphia & Columbus,  
no. 15; 1970-71 Baltimore, San  
Francisco & Brooklyn, no. 83;  
1971-72 Paris, no. 152; 1972  
Bordeaux, no. 52; 1972-73



289c Photograph of *Au Franc Buveur*,  
c. 1905. From: Richard 1988, p. 21.



289d Eugène Atget, photograph of  
the Moulin de la Galette, n.d. From:  
Paris 1988, p. 5.

Strasbourg & Bern, no. 57; 1976-77  
Tokyo, Kyoto & Nagoya, no. 54;  
1988 Paris, no. 10; 1990 Otterlo,  
no. 151; 2000 Tokyo, no. 17.

<sup>1</sup> The identification was made in Leprohon 1972, pp. 349, 350, although the author refers to it as *Aux Billards en Bois*. This was corrected in Richard 1988, pp. 20, 21, for the *Au Franc Buveur* was only renamed several years after Van Gogh left Paris.

<sup>2</sup> Paris 1988, cat. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, cat. 11.

width of the drawing but most of it was lost when the sheet was torn out. It might be the remains of the flyleaf of a drawing pad, which would mean that it was the first or last sheet in the pad.

The initial draft was in pencil, which Van Gogh erased here and there to suggest the trellis-work. He then added highlights in the sky over the pencil with white chalk, and worked up other passages with the pen and brush in black ink. Almost all the figures were done directly in ink, only those in the right background being laid down first with pencil. The ink itself has remained remarkably black, so is probably colourfast Indian ink. Although the perspective of the composition is reasonably complex no construction lines can be detected.



289<sup>e</sup> A.J.H., photograph of the Moulin de la Galette, n.d. Paris, Musée de Montmartre.

## 290 The boulevard de Clichy

Like most of the Paris street scenes, *The boulevard de Clichy* was made near the apartment Van Gogh shared with his brother Theo in the rue Lepic, which emerges onto the boulevard on the far right. The wall and tree above the heads of the two women in the right foreground stand on a site which has been occupied by the Moulin Rouge since 1889. Van Gogh took up a position on the south side of the boulevard, on the corner of the rue Fontaine, and was looking across the place Blanche to the north-western section of the boulevard.

This is by far the most detailed of the townscapes in this volume. The scene is populated with some 20 figures, ranging from tiny blobs in the far distance to the two quite detailed but clumsily proportioned ladies in the foreground. There are also a few anecdotal touches. Standing on a ladder at the beginning of the central reservation dividing the boulevard is a man lighting the gas lamp, and there are two minuscule figures high up on the balcony of the large building on the right. On its side wall is an inscription in faded ink which can only be deciphered with difficulty: 'LE / PETIT JOURNAL / tous les jours / 900.0[00] / exemplaires / 7<sup>e</sup> [possibly 2<sup>e</sup>] n<sup>o</sup> 5 centimes'. The leafless trees and warmly clad women show that it was a cool time of year, which supports the springtime dating explained in the *Window in the Bataille restaurant* (cat. 288).

Van Gogh made a sparser painting of the same subject which lacks the two women, the lamplighter and the inscription on the wall (fig. 290a). The canvas gives a stronger sense of springtime, for the trees appear to be in bud. It is unlikely that the drawing was the model for the painting (or vice versa); the difference in perspective is a little too great. When making the painting, or the design for it, he chose a spot a little further to the left, possibly on the corner of the rue Fontaine and the rue Blanche.<sup>1</sup>

The drawing was laid down with pencil, some parts of which Van Gogh worked up with ink and others with coloured chalk. He then added touches of opaque white watercolour here and there and scraped or rubbed off some of the chalk.

The yellowed paper was originally the blue-grey seen at the edges, which were protected from the light by a mount. Similarly, it can be seen that the orange chalk used in the street in the foreground and the houses on the right

FEBRUARY-MARCH 1887

Pencil, pen in brown (originally black) ink, orange and blue chalk, opaque white watercolour, on laid paper which was originally blue-grey

40.1 x 54.4 cm

Unsigned

Inv. d 356 V/1962

F 1393 JH 1217

### PROVENANCE

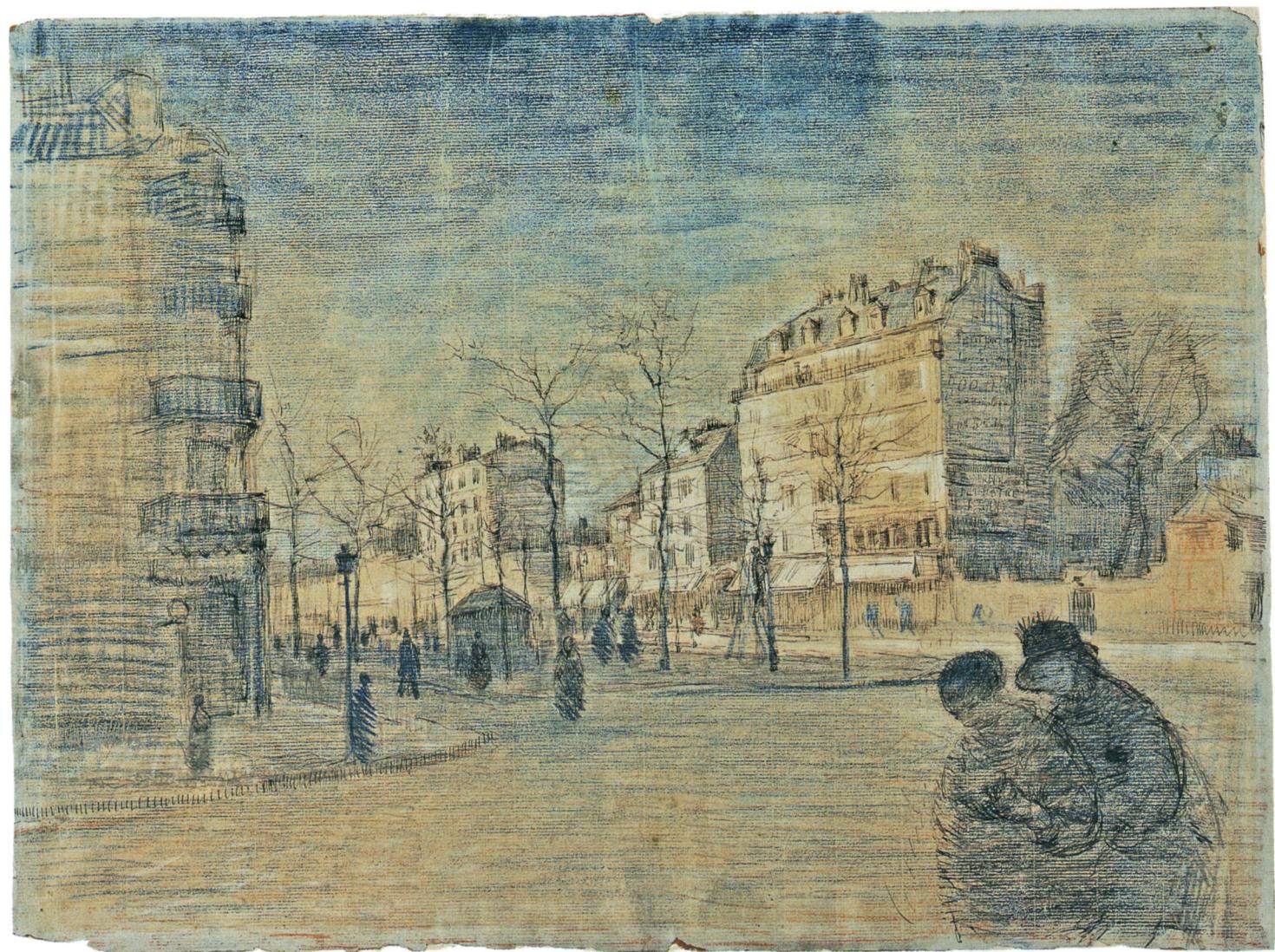
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1931-62 on loan to  
the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;  
1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation;  
1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk  
Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on per-  
manent loan to the Van Gogh  
Museum, Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 122, vol. 4,  
pl. CXLIII; Cooper 1955, pp. 49, 50;  
De Gruyter 1961, p. 90; London  
1968, pp. 61, 62, no. 69; De la Faille  
1970, pp. 488, 489, 661; Amsterdam  
1987, p. 447, no. 2.479; Feilchenfeldt  
1988, p. 130; Otterlo 1990, p. 35; De  
la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 122, 361, vol.  
2, pl. CXLIII; Heen 1995, pp. 152,  
153, 243; Hulsker 1996, pp. 268-70.

### EXHIBITIONS

1896 Paris, no cat. known [not for  
sale]; 1905 Amsterdam 1, no. 349  
[Dfl. 300]; 1906 Rotterdam, no. 63;  
1906 Middelburg, no catalogue;  
1909-10 Munich, unnumbered,  
Frankfurt, Dresden & Chemnitz,  
no cat. known [Dfl. 1,200]; 1910  
Leiden, no cat. known; 1911 Amster-  
dam, no. 63 [Dfl. 1,500]; 1911-12



290 The boulevard de Clichy

was once redder. It is above all the yellowing of the paper that has thrown the colour composition out of balance. Broadly speaking, the scene was conceived in various shades of blue, but the blue chalk is now more pronounced than Van Gogh intended.

The combination of pen and chalk is more successful than in the *Window in the Bataille restaurant* (cat. 288), where the pen strokes are often overwhelmed by the heavy chalk. Here Van Gogh struck a better balance. It is possible that the ink was originally darker and more prominent. The ink corrosion proves that Van Gogh used iron-gall ink, which has probably turned from black to brown.

A watercolour in the Van Gogh Museum, once attributed to Van Gogh but rightly rejected by Welsh-Ovcharov, shows exactly the same row of houses on the far side of the boulevard de Clichy (fig. 290b).<sup>2</sup> It was part of the collection that came to the museum from the Van Gogh family, so Theo or Vincent probably received or bought it from an artist friend in Paris.

Hamburg, no cat. known [DM? 1,500]; 1914-15 Amsterdam, no. 135; 1920 New York, no. 6 [\$3,000]; 1926 Amsterdam, no. 46; 1927-28 Berlin, no. 49; 1928 Vienna & Hannover, no. 49; 1928 Paris, no. 50; 1929 Amsterdam, no. 42; 1929-30 Rotterdam, no. 30; 1930 Laren, no. 46; 1930-31 Arnhem, Groningen, Leeuwarden & Enschede, no cat. known, no. 25, no cat. known, respectively; 1931 Amsterdam, no. 188; 1945 Amsterdam, unnumbered; 1946 Stockholm, Gothenburg & Malmö, no. 36; 1946 Copenhagen, no. 38; 1946-47 Liège, Brussels & Mons, no. 42; 1947 Paris, no. 42; 1947 Geneva, no. 43; 1947-48 London, Birmingham & Glasgow, no. 133; 1948 Bergen & Oslo, no. 82 and no. 83, respectively; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 236; 1949-50 New York & Chicago, no. 62; 1953 Zundert, no. 48; 1953 Hoensbroek, no. 98; 1954-55 Bern, no. 127; 1955 Antwerp, no. 234; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 133; 1955-56 Liverpool, Manchester & Newcastle-upon-Tyne, no. 102; 1956 Haarlem, no. 55; 1957 Nijmegen, no. 45; 1957-58 Stockholm, no. 54, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken & Gothenburg, no cat. known; 1960-61 Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg & Toronto, no. 119; 1961-62 Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo & Boston, no. 111; 1962-63 Pittsburgh, Detroit & Kansas City, no. 111; 1963 Humlebaek, no. 87; 1964 Washington & New York, no. 87; 1965-66 Stockholm & Gothenburg, no. 80, no cat. known, respectively; 1967 Wolfsburg, no. 100; 1967-68 Dallas, Philadelphia, Toledo & Ottawa, no. 34; 1968 Liège, no. 34; 1968-69 London, no. 69; 1971-72 Paris, no. 158; 1975 Malmö, no. 57; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 57; 1976-77 Tokyo, Kyoto & Nagoya, no. 51; 1985-86 Tokyo & Nagoya, no. 50; 1986 Osaka, no. 29; 1990 Otterlo, no. 157; 2000 Tokyo, no. 19.



290a *The boulevard de Clichy* (F 292 JH 1219), 1887. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



290b Artist unknown, *The boulevard de Clichy* (F 1405 JH 1187), 1887. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

1 Three streets emerge on the south side of the place Blanche: the rue Fontaine, the rue Blanche and the rue de Bruxelles.

2 Welsh-Ovcharov 1976, p. 237.

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## 291 View from the apartment in the rue Lepic

FEBRUARY-MARCH 1887

Pencil, charcoal, grey wash, pen  
in black ink, on laid paper

39.5 × 53.9 cm

Watermark: remnants of Lalanne,  
truncated at the bottom edge

Unsigned

Inv. d 442 V/1962  
F 1391 JH 1220

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1931-62 on loan  
to the Stedelijk Museum, Amster-  
dam; 1962 Vincent van Gogh  
Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to  
the Stedelijk Museum, Amster-  
dam; 1973 on permanent loan to  
the Van Gogh Museum, Amster-  
dam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 122,  
vol. 4, pl. CXLIII; De la Faille 1970,  
pp. 488, 661; Amsterdam 1987,  
p. 447, no. 2.477; Otterlo 1990,  
p. 206; Paris 1988, pp. 92, 93,  
no. 27; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1,  
pp. 122, 361, vol. 2, pl. CXLIII;  
Heenk 1994, p. 37; Heenk 1995,  
pp. 152, 243; Hulsker 1996,  
p. 270.

EXHIBITIONS

1905 Amsterdam 1, no. 346  
[Dfl. 100]; 1914-15 Amsterdam,  
no. 131; 1926-27 London, no. 39  
[Dfl. 900]; 1927-28 Berlin, no. 54;  
1928 Vienna & Hannover, no. 54;  
1928 Paris, no. 54; 1931 Amster-  
dam, no. 182; 1945 Amsterdam,  
unnumbered; 1946-47 Liège,  
Brussels & Mons, no. 40; 1947

This view over the city is also the subject of two paintings (figs. 291a, b), and was drawn from the apartment which Vincent and his brother shared at 54, rue Lepic. It has wrongly been suggested that the panorama visible between the two tall buildings is identical to the view which Van Gogh depicted in several studies (cats. 225-227) and a painting (fig. 225b) a year earlier. The towers in figs. 291a and 291b are supposedly those of Notre-Dame.<sup>1</sup> In fact, he was looking in a very different direction altogether, for this is the view from a window facing west, across the rue de Maistre, on which the lefthand building stood, and the Cimetière de Montmartre (known as the Cimetière du Nord in those days). Tombstones and tombs in the cemetery can be seen above and to the right of the building in the lower foreground). A photograph (fig. 291c) shows the view in the opposite direction, with the photographer looking across the cemetery towards the brothers' apartment, which is circled.<sup>2</sup>

There is also no support for the theory that the drawing was a preparatory study for the Pointillist painting in the Van Gogh Museum.<sup>3</sup> For that and the other painted version (now in a private collection) Van Gogh took up a position further to the right. There is space in the drawing between the lower building in the foreground and the façade of the one closing off the composition on the right, whereas in the painting the façade overlaps the lower building. In addition, the church towers just to the right of the lefthand building are far further to the right in the painting.

This is one of a group of drawings of Paris which Van Gogh made in the early spring of 1887. That dating is explained in cat. 288, and is supported by the leafless trees in this drawing and in the painting in the private collection. As to the paintings, which are in a Pointillist style, it is likely that they were made shortly after Van Gogh had become acquainted with Paul Signac and his Neo-impressionist work. He probably met Signac in January 1887, and the two soon became friends, going out painting together.<sup>4</sup>

Views over the roofs of Paris, which unlike cats. 225-227 are not true panoramas, are found quite frequently in the work of the Impressionists and their followers. Both Gustave Caillebotte (fig. 291d) and Signac



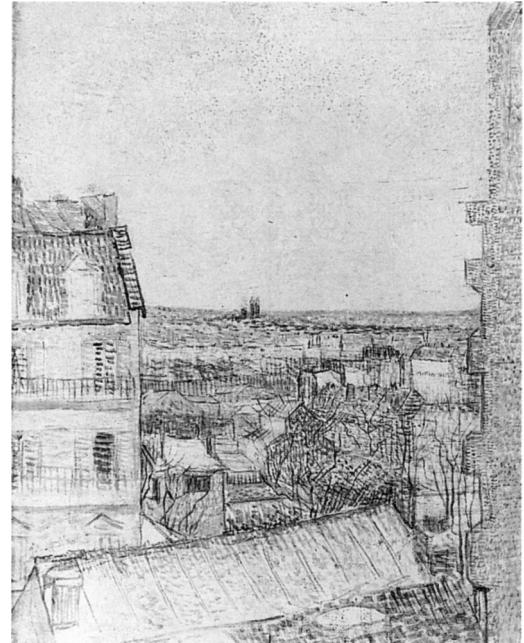
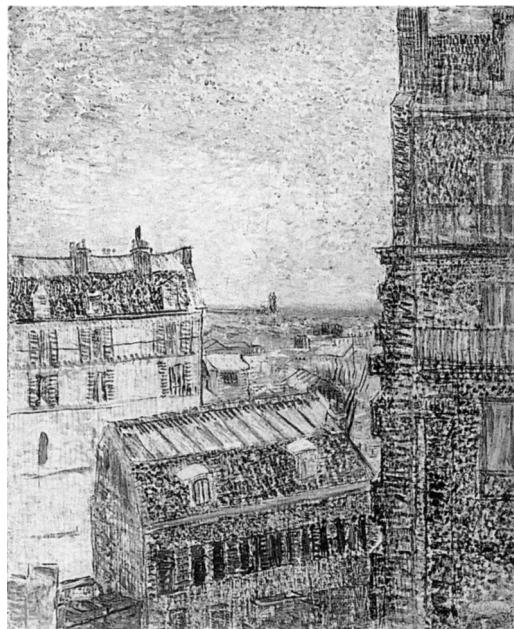
291 View from the apartment in the rue Lepic

Paris, no. 40; 1947 Geneva, no. 41; 1947-48 London, Birmingham & Glasgow, no. 131; 1948 Bergen & Oslo, no. 80 and no. 81, respectively; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 234; 1953 Zundert, no. 51; 1953 Hoensbroek, no. 101; 1953 Assen, no. 44; 1953-54 Bergen op Zoom, no. 52; 1957 Nijmegen, no. 43; 1957-58 Stockholm, no. 53, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken & Gothenburg, no. cat. known; 1958-59 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland & Seattle, no. 114; 1960 Enschede, no. 30; 1961 Scarborough, no. catalogue; 1962 London, no. 49; 1963 Humlebaek, no. 86; 1964 Washington & New York, no. 86; 1965 Charleroi & Ghent, no. 55; 1966 Paris & Albi, no. 33; 1967 Lille & Zürich, no. 35; 1967 Glasgow, no. 43; 1971-72 Paris, no. 156; 1975 Malmö, no. 56; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 56; 1977 Paris, unnumbered; 1985-86 Tokyo & Nagoya, no. 49; 1986 Osaka, no. 28; 1990 Otterlo, no. 154; 2000 Tokyo, no. 18.

produced paintings of this kind.<sup>5</sup> However, Van Gogh did not discover the subject from them, for in Antwerp he had already made a small painting with a view over the houses behind his rooms.<sup>6</sup>

Parts of the drawing are quite highly detailed, especially in the mid-ground. The cemetery is instantly recognisable, and there is an inscription on a building beyond it, although it is difficult to read.<sup>7</sup> There are two small figures down on the pavement between the house in the foreground and the façade on the right. By contrast, the left of the drawing is unfinished for some reason.

Van Gogh drew the scene first with pencil and charcoal, the latter being a material he rarely used. He went over this draft with the pen in black ink, which has retained its colour remarkably well. At various places he then used pencil and charcoal over the ink. The graphite and charcoal in the large side of the building on the right was smeared out with a brush dipped in water.



291a *View from the apartment in the rue Lepic* (F 341 JH 1242), 1887. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

291b *View from the apartment in the rue Lepic* (F 341a JH 1243), 1887. Whereabouts unknown.

The wood-pulp, laid paper, which has been trimmed on all sides, has yellowed quite badly. Along the bottom edge are traces of the Lalanne watermark. The fragile sheet, which has a diagonal crease at lower right and several repaired tears, has been laid down, that is to say pasted onto a backing sheet of Japanese paper.

1 Paris 1988, cat. 28.

2 With thanks to Gérard Jouhet for alerting us to the existence of this photograph.

3 Paris 1988, cat. 27.

4 See the Introduction for the artists with whom Van Gogh became acquainted in Paris.

5 Paul Signac, View from a window, rue d'Orchampt, 1883-84. Whereabouts unknown.

6 F 260 JH 970.

7 Some of the letters are clear enough: 'se [...] u [or possibly v] in'. It might be a proper name like Séguin.



291c L.L., Photograph of the Pont Caulaincourt with Montmartre in the background, c. 1910. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.



291d Gustave Caillebotte, *Roofs in the snow*, 1878. Zürich, Fondation Rau pour le Tiers-monde.

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## 292 Gardens on Montmartre and the Blute-fin windmill

FEBRUARY-MARCH 1887

Pencil, blue, orange, white and green chalk, on laid paper  
39.8 x 53.8 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 228 V/1962  
F 1396 JH 1222

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 123,  
vol. 4, pl. CXLIV; De la Faille 1970,  
pp. 489, 661; Amsterdam 1987,  
p. 447, no. 2.476; Paris 1988,  
pp. 80, 81, no. 21; Otterlo 1990,  
p. 205; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1,  
pp. 123, 362, vol. 2, pl. CXLIV;  
Heenk 1994, p. 37; Heenk 1995,  
pp. 152, 243; Hulsker 1996,  
p. 270.

EXHIBITIONS

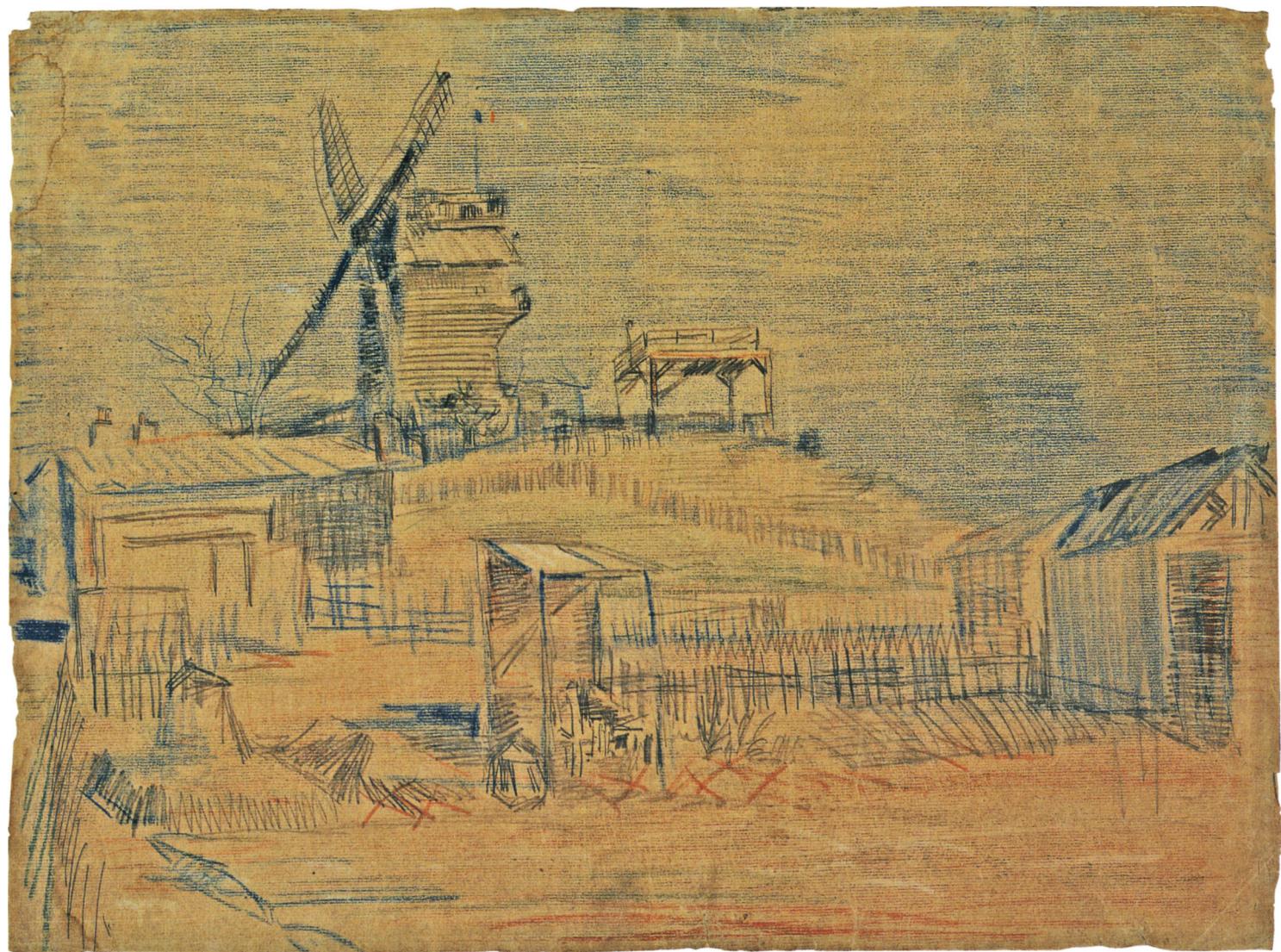
1905 Amsterdam 11, no. 468  
[Dfl. 150]; 1914-15 Amsterdam,  
no. 136; 1920 New York, no. 9  
[\$2,000]; 1923 Utrecht, no. 10;  
1923 Rotterdam, no cat. known;  
1927-28 Berlin, no. 48; 1928  
Vienna & Hannover, no. 48; 1928  
Paris, no. 49; 1946-47 Liège,  
Brussels & Mons, no. 43; 1947  
Paris, no. 43; 1947 Geneva, no. 44;  
1947-48 London, Birmingham &  
Glasgow, no. 134; 1948 Bergen  
& Oslo, no. 83 and no. 84,

The majestic Le Blute-fin was one of three surviving windmills on Montmartre in Van Gogh's day. The others were Le Radet and the smaller Debray, also called the Moulin à Poivre. Le Radet and Le Blute-fin were part of the leisure centre called the Moulin de la Galette. The name of that complex, which consisted of the two mills and the Ferme Debray, which belonged to the family of the same name, has often given rise to confusion, for there was no windmill called La Galette. Le Blute-fin was the one most often depicted by Van Gogh, mainly in paintings, and it is also the dominant element in two other finished drawings (figs. 292a, b).<sup>1</sup> The one in the Stichting P. en N. de Boer is datable to 1886 on the evidence of the dark palette. The drawing in the Phillips Collection, in which the belvedere is hidden by the mill, is stylistically related to the group of city views discussed in this volume (cats. 289-292). All the drawings and paintings of Le Blute-fin differ in vantage point and composition, and none was used as a model for another. This particular sheet shows the north-western side of the hill, which was topped by Le Blute-fin. The slope below it was dotted with vegetable gardens and sheds for storing garden tools.

Le Blute-fin dated from 1622, and by Van Gogh's day it was no more than a sightseeing attraction. The belvedere facing the south-west had a marvellous view over the city. Here it is behind the mill, but that was always relative because it was a fixed structure whereas the mill could be turned so that its sails faced the wind, although by now it was no longer used for grinding corn. The windmills on the *Butte Montmartre* had long been popular with artists for their picturesque qualities. They feature in engravings from the beginning of the 19th century, and Georges Michel (1763-1843) later depicted them standing alone in the landscape on several occasions. Van Gogh and his contemporaries were undoubtedly attracted by the fascinating contrast between the old, rustic monuments and the rapidly encroaching city.

That this is one of the group of picturesque city views which Van Gogh made in the early spring of 1887 (for the dating of which see cat. 288) is borne out by the bare trees flanking the mill.

Van Gogh allowed the creamy colour of the paper to contribute to the composition, particularly in the foreground, and the fact that he applied his



292 Gardens on Montmartre and the Blute-fin windmill

respectively; 1953 Assen, no. 45; 1953-54 Bergen op Zoom, no. 53; 1954-55 Bern, no. 128; 1962 London, no. 50; 1965-66 Stockholm & Gothenburg, no. 79, no cat. known, respectively; 1967 Wolfsburg, no. 101; 1971-72 Paris, no. 159; 1975 Malmö, no. 54; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 54; 1976-77 Tokyo, Kyoto & Nagoya, no. 52; 1982 Amsterdam, no catalogue; 1988 Paris, no. 21; 1990 Otterlo, no. 153.

<sup>1</sup> The mill was also drawn in a sketch-book, F 1395 JH 1188 (Van der Wolk 1987, SB6/29, p. 165). *Le Blute-fin* appears in the paintings F 271 JH 1186 (destroyed by fire), F 272 JH 1183, F 273 JH 1116, F 274 JH 1115, F 348 JH 1182 and F 348a JH 1221. The belvedere beside the mill is the main subject of F 348 JH 1182. The mill features in other paintings and drawings as well, but only those in which it is the main subject are mentioned here.

colours more sparingly than usual gives the scene a rare delicacy. He drew it first in pencil before adding colour with blue, white, orange and green chalk, some of which he scraped off in the foreground. The wood-pulp paper has yellowed with age. It was also slightly larger before being trimmed on all sides. There is water damage on the left edge.



292<sup>a</sup> *The Blute-fin windmill*, (F 1397 JH 1173), 1886. Amsterdam, Stichting P. en N. de Boer.



292<sup>b</sup> *The Blute-fin windmill*, (F 1396a JH 1185), 1886. Washington DC, The Phillips Collection.

## 293-297 Musicians

Paris was famed for the variety of public entertainment it offered in the closing decades of the 19th century. People went to the theatre, the opera or the ballet, listened to concerts, danced in one of the many dance-halls, or relaxed during an evening at a 'café-concert'. The music was provided by orchestras or smaller ensembles. The musicians, the other performers and the public were depicted on many occasions in paintings and drawings, particularly by the Impressionists (fig. 293a), which Van Gogh would undoubtedly have known.

Although there is little information about how Van Gogh amused himself in his spare time, it can be assumed that he, too, visited these establishments, given the large number of them and his friendship with artists like Toulouse-Lautrec.<sup>1</sup> The only Paris works recording such visits are the five drawings discussed here and cat. 300. The musicians, who did not pose for the drawings, were captured swiftly and convincingly.<sup>2</sup>

The five drawings form a coherent group not only as regards the subjects but also in the materials used, the style and the paper.<sup>3</sup> Van Gogh drew the musicians directly with coloured chalks alone. He was not, in other words, using the colours to impart liveliness to a drawing in black chalk or pencil, as he had up until then.<sup>4</sup> It is known from his friend Hartrick's autobiography that in early 1887 Van Gogh never left home without large pieces of coloured chalk in his pockets with which he could record instant impressions of what he saw.<sup>5</sup> Two of these musicians are in blue chalk (cats. 294, 297) and two in green (cats. 295, 296). It was only in the *Violinist seen from the back* (cat. 293) that he combined both colours.

All five are rapid sketches in which parallel lines were used to capture the figures. This vigorous style is also found in various other works from the Paris period, such as *Dying slave and figures at a table* (cat. 283), *Study for 'Woman sitting by a cradle'* (cat. 306) and *Head of a man wearing a hat* (fig. 293b).

The five musicians are on three sheets of pale grey wove paper, all of which have three original cut edges and one torn edge, indicating that they came from the same sketchpad. The sheets with *Dying slave and figures at*

<sup>1</sup> At the end of 1886 Van Gogh was helping Toulouse-Lautrec at receptions in *Le Mirliton*, the cabaret run by Aristide Bruant. See Paris 1988, pp. 17, 30.

<sup>2</sup> The only previous time he had dealt with popular entertainment was in his sketches of dance-halls in Antwerp (cats. 207-209).

<sup>3</sup> The drawing materials and paper of cat. 300 place it outside this group.

<sup>4</sup> See cats. 236 and 237, for example. The only exception is cat. 219, which has contours and details in red chalk, although the initial draft was in charcoal.

<sup>5</sup> Hartrick 1939, p. 51. See also cats. 283 and 288.



293 Violinist seen from the back



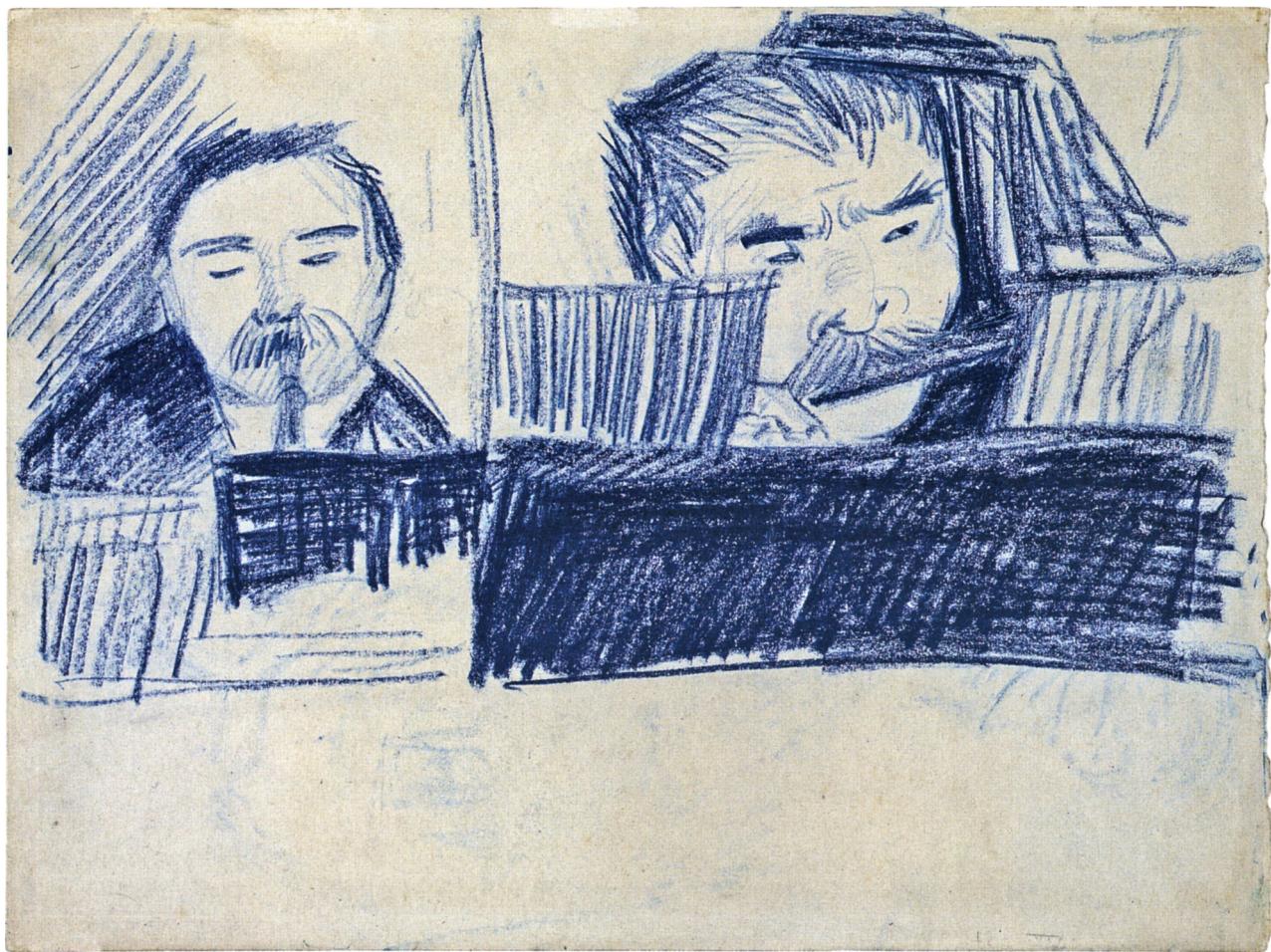
294 Violinist seen from the front



295 Double-bass player



296 Pianist



297 Clarinettist and piccolo player

*a table* (cat. 283), *Head of a man in a top hat* (cat. 298) and *Head of a man (possibly Theo van Gogh)* (cat. 299) also came from that pad.<sup>6</sup>

That Van Gogh was better at drawing people than musical instruments is very apparent. The violin of the man seen frontally (cat. 294) is missing half its body, and that of the *Violinist seen from the back* (cat. 293) is far too thick. The same goes for the scroll at the top of the double-bass in cat. 295.

In the sketch of the violinist seen from the back (cat. 293), the only one of the five done in two colours, Van Gogh first drew the violin and the man's head, shoulders and left arm with blue chalk. He then switched to green for the back of the man's jacket, the underside of the instrument, the bow and the crown of the man's head. It is not entirely clear why Van Gogh used two colours in this drawing. The most obvious explanation, that he was trying to reproduce a chiaroscuro effect, does not follow. The green on the balding head is meant to denote a light passage, while the same colour in the violin suggests the shadowed side of the instrument. Van Gogh indicated the movement of the bow with thin lines either side of it. There are also lines around the body of the violin, but they probably belong to the first draft.

On the back of the drawing is a sketch of the same man, now seen from the front (cat. 294). He has a moustache and, despite his baldness, a lock of hair hanging down over his right eye. On this side of the sheet there are offsets of blue chalk made when Van Gogh drew the violinist seen from the back. He evidently used so much force as to pick up blue chalk from *Clarinetist and piccolo player* (cat. 297), the drawing below this sheet in the sketchpad.

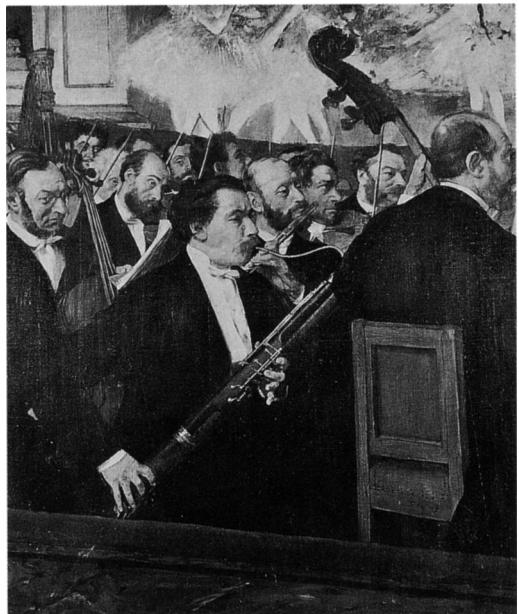
What is striking about the *Double-bass player* (cat. 295) is that he is way off-centre, so much so that his nose is touching the edge of the paper. Most of the figure of the cigarette-smoking pianist in cat. 296 is also on the right of the sheet. This placement and the cropping are the first indications of the influence of Japanese prints on Van Gogh's drawings.

The pianist is seated behind a bar running diagonally across the scene, which was probably the railing around the orchestra pit. The sheet music on the stand is lit by a candle. As in cat. 294, there are impressions left by blue chalk from a drawing which has not survived.

Cat. 297 shows two wind players in separate, framed sketches: a clarinetist on the left and a piccolo player on the right.<sup>7</sup> Both men are seated behind music stands. Once again, Van Gogh did not use the entire sheet, but left a bare strip at the bottom. He scraped off some of the chalk from the moustache, hair and instrument of the piccolo player. There are also

<sup>6</sup> Study for 'Woman sitting by a cradle' (cat. 306) was drawn on the back of cat. 297, so is also on this wove paper. Heenk 1995, p. 153, added a park scene in blue chalk (F 1298v JH 1614) to the group on the basis of similarities in materials and paper. However, on the back of it is a landscape from Arles, and the sheet has always been dated to that period. Although the subject and draughtsmanship of the park scene provide no definite answer as to where the drawing was made, it is unlikely that it was Paris, for that would mean that this sketchy scene was the only drawing which Van Gogh took with him to the south of France, and given the subject that is not very probable.

<sup>7</sup> That the instrument played by the man on the right is a piccolo and not a flute can be deduced from its thinness and the fact that one of the musician's hands is close to his face.



293<sup>a</sup> Edgar Degas, *The orchestra of the Opéra*, 1868-69. Paris, Musée d'Orsay.

8 Tralbaut 1955 III. The related works are cats. 298, 299, 300 and 306. All these drawings had always been in the family collection but De la Faille probably overlooked them when he came to write his œuvre catalogue.

9 Paris illustré 4, no. 50.

10 That issue is now in the collection of the Van Gogh Museum, inv. t 1340 V/1962.

11 Bowness, in London 1968, also refers to the relationship between these works and that issue of Paris illustré, but dated the drawings to March-June 1886, having failed to see that the magazine was only published in August. Van der Wolk in Otterlo 1990 is the only author who believes that the group originated in Antwerp, but fails to explain why.

12 Van Gogh Museum archives, Amsterdam.

13 Hulsker 1996, pp. 250, 252.

14 See cat. 306 for the reasoning behind that dating.

15 It was not until the summer of 1887 that Van Gogh began producing works of an overtly Japanese nature, such as the copies in oils after Japanese prints and cat. 318. See the Introduction for the influence of Japanese art on Van Gogh's drawings.

16 See letters 644/510 and 646/511.

traces of blue chalk which were transferred from the drawing of the violinist seen from the front (cat. 294).

This group of musicians was first published by Tralbaut in 1955, along with a few related drawings.<sup>8</sup> He made a connection between the musicians and a special issue of *Paris illustré* devoted entirely to café-concerts, which was illustrated by Raffaëlli and published on 1 August 1886 (fig. 293c).<sup>9</sup> Van Gogh had a copy of it, which led Tralbaut to conclude that Raffaëlli's illustrations inspired him to make similar scenes.<sup>10</sup> That cannot be ruled out, of course, but apart from the subject matter they have little in common with Raffaëlli's works. Van Gogh made rapid sketches of isolated figures seen from close by, whereas Raffaëlli's musicians are merely part of a larger scene.

On the basis of the supposed relationship to the issue of *Paris illustré*, Tralbaut dated Van Gogh's musicians shortly after its appearance, that is to say the late summer of 1886, and that has generally been followed in later publications.<sup>11</sup> Hulsker was the first to suggest, in an unpublished note of December 1991, that the drawings could not have been made any earlier than the summer of 1886 (working on the assumption that they were indeed inspired by Raffaëlli's illustrations), but that they probably dated from a good deal later, namely 1887.<sup>12</sup> The main indicator for the later date, according to him, is the use of coloured chalk, which Hartrick had said Van Gogh always had about him, certainly in the early months of 1887. Oddly, though, Hulsker reverted to the 1886 dating in the most recent edition of his œuvre catalogue.<sup>13</sup>

The coloured chalk (and it should be pointed out that it is not known precisely when Van Gogh started using it) combined with the swift execution provide the evidence for dating the group in the first half of 1887 after all. That broad span can be narrowed to the first quarter of the year, because a drawing related to the group, *Head of a man (possibly Theo van Gogh)* (cat. 299), left an impression on a neighbouring sheet which Van Gogh only used in the spring or summer of 1887 for *Study for 'Woman sitting by a cradle'* (cat. 306).<sup>14</sup>

Confirmation that the drawings were not made before then is provided by the small sketch, *Head of a man wearing a hat* (fig. 293b), which was also executed with firm, broad strokes. Van Gogh drew it in one of his sketchbooks, signed it, tore it out and gave it to his friend Emile Bernard, with whom he only struck up a friendship in the early months of 1887.

Another argument for a dating in the first quarter of 1887 is the influence of Japanese prints, which appears to be making its first tentative

appearance in these drawings, with figures placed off-centre and truncated, as it does in paintings from the period.<sup>15</sup> By now Van Gogh had already built up a sizable collection of these prints and tried to interest other artists in them, among them Bernard and Anquetin.<sup>16</sup> In March and April 1887 he even staged an exhibition of Japanese prints in the Tambourin café.



293b *Head of a man wearing a hat*  
(F 1715 JH 1161), 1887. Whereabouts  
unknown.



293c Jean-François Raffaelli, *La Quadrille naturaliste aux Ambassadeurs*, illustration from *Paris illustré*, August 1886, pp. 136, 137. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

**293 Violinist seen from the back**

JANUARY-APRIL 1887  
Blue and green chalk on wove paper  
34.9 x 25.8 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 294

Inv. d 20 V/1962  
F 1244ar JH 1154

**PROVENANCE**  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**  
Tralbaut 1955 III, pp. 23, 28, 35, fig. 14; London 1968, p. 59, no. 63; De la Faille 1970, pp. 494, 656; Amsterdam 1987, p. 443, no. 2.457; Van der Wolk 1987, p. 292; Otterlo 1990, pp. 31, 183; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 318, vol. 2, pl. ccxxv; Heenk 1995, pp. 132, 153; Hulsker 1996, pp. 250, 252.

**EXHIBITIONS**  
1955 Antwerp, no. 223; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 122; 1955-56 Liverpool, Manchester & Newcastle-upon-Tyne, no. 99; 1967 Wolfsburg, no. 103; 1968-69 London, no. 63; 1990 Otterlo, no. 128.

**294 Violinist seen from the front**

JANUARY-APRIL 1887  
Blue chalk on wove paper  
25.8 x 34.9 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 293

Inv. d 20 V/1962  
F 1244av JH 1156

**PROVENANCE**

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**

Tralbaut 1955 III, pp. 23, 26, fig. 12; De la Faille 1970, pp. 494, 656; Amsterdam 1987, p. 444, no. 2.459; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 318, vol. 2, pl. ccxxv; Heenk 1995, p. 153; Hulsker 1996, pp. 250, 252.

**EXHIBITIONS**

1955 Antwerp, no. 221; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 124; 1962 London, no. 38.

**295 Double-bass player**

JANUARY-APRIL 1887  
Green chalk on wove paper  
34.8 x 25.8 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 296

Inv. d 18 V/1962  
F 1244cv JH 1153

**PROVENANCE**

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**

Tralbaut 1955 III, pp. 23, 25, fig. 7; De la Faille 1970, pp. 495, 656; Amsterdam 1987, p. 443, no. 2.456; Van der Wolk 1987, p. 292; Otterlo 1990, pp. 31, 183; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 319, vol. 2, pl. ccxxvi; Heenk 1995, pp. 132, 153, 155; Hulsker 1996, pp. 250, 252, 253.

**EXHIBITIONS**

1955 Antwerp, no. 220; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 121; 1955-56 Liverpool, Manchester & Newcastle-upon-Tyne, no. 98; 1976-77 Tokyo, Kyoto & Nagoya, no. 45; 1990 Otterlo, no. 127.

**296 Pianist**

JANUARY-APRIL 1887  
Green chalk on wove paper  
25.8 x 34.8 cm  
Verso of cat. 295

Inv. d 18 V/1962  
F 1244cr JH 1157

**PROVENANCE**

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62

V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**

Tralbaut 1955 III, pp. 23, 24, fig. 5; De la Faille 1970, pp. 495, 656; Amsterdam 1987, p. 444, no. 2.460; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 318, 319, vol. 2, pl. ccxxvi; Heenk 1995, pp. 132, 153, 155; Hulsker 1996, pp. 250, 252, 253.

**EXHIBITIONS**

1955 Antwerp, no. 219; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 120.

**297 Clarinettist and piccolo player**

JANUARY-APRIL 1887  
Blue chalk on wove paper  
25.7 x 34.9 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 306

Inv. d 19 V/1962  
F 1244br JH 1155

**PROVENANCE**

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

**LITERATURE**

Tralbaut 1955 III, pp. 23, 30, fig. 15, 16; London 1968, p. 59, no. 62; De la Faille 1970, pp. 494, 656; Amsterdam 1987, p. 444, no. 2.458; Otterlo 1990, p. 183; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 318, vol. 2, pl. ccxxvi; Heenk 1995, pp. 132, 153; Hulsker 1996, pp. 250, 252.

**EXHIBITIONS**

1955 Antwerp, no. 224; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 125; 1968-69 London, no. 62; 1971-72 Paris, no. 144; 1972 Bordeaux, no. 50; 1990 Otterlo, no. 130.

## 298, 299 Studies of heads

*Head of a man in a top hat* (cat. 298) and *Head of a man (possibly Theo van Gogh)* (cat. 299) were drawn with coloured chalks, as were Van Gogh's five sketches of musicians.<sup>1</sup> Cat. 298 has particularly strong affinities with that group in its combination of blue and green chalk and sketchy style. Van Gogh drew the figure with green chalk before using blue for the shaded parts of the hat and the cloak. *Head of a man (possibly Theo van Gogh)* is a more finished work in no fewer than four colours and white watercolour over the initial draft in black chalk. Like the musicians series, both drawings are dated to the first three months of 1887.<sup>2</sup>

It is impossible to say where Van Gogh sketched the man in the top hat, whether it was in the same establishment where the musicians were performing or elsewhere. The man appears to be well dressed with his cloak and elegant hat, although the latter was by now out of fashion.<sup>3</sup>

*Head of a man (possibly Theo van Gogh)* was laid down with thin lines of black chalk,<sup>4</sup> parts of which were stumped and rubbed to model the face. Van Gogh then filled the background with diagonal strokes of blue chalk, which he also used for the clothing. He finished by giving the head its contour and colour with firm strokes of orange and black chalk. The orange is drier than the other colours, all of which have a greasy sheen. The collar sticking up above the blue jacket was whitened with opaque watercolour. The carmine areas visible beneath the blue of the jacket here and there were partly erased and scraped off by Van Gogh, probably because he was dissatisfied with the colour.

The careful finish suggests that Van Gogh did not draw some chance passer-by but made a study of someone who posed for him. In 1980, Arnold was the first to suggest that the sitter might be Theo van Gogh.<sup>5</sup> He compared the drawing with a photograph of 1878 in which Theo is seen obliquely from the front (fig. 298a).<sup>6</sup> Although the drawing was made nine years later, and it is difficult to compare a face seen in profile with one *en trois quarts*, there is certainly a striking resemblance: the large, curved nose, the shape of the nostrils, the moustache and the small, round ears. The moustache in the drawing is longer, but is similar to the one in a photograph of 1889 (fig. 298b).

<sup>1</sup> The drawings are on the recto and verso of the same sheet of paper.

<sup>2</sup> See cats. 293-297 for the reasoning behind this dating.

<sup>3</sup> The kind of top hat fashionable at this time did not have straight sides but slightly curved ones. We are grateful to Frieda Sorber of the Provinciaal Textielmuseum, Ranst (Oelegem) in Belgium, who kindly identified articles of clothing in Van Gogh's painted and drawn œuvre from his Antwerp and Paris periods.

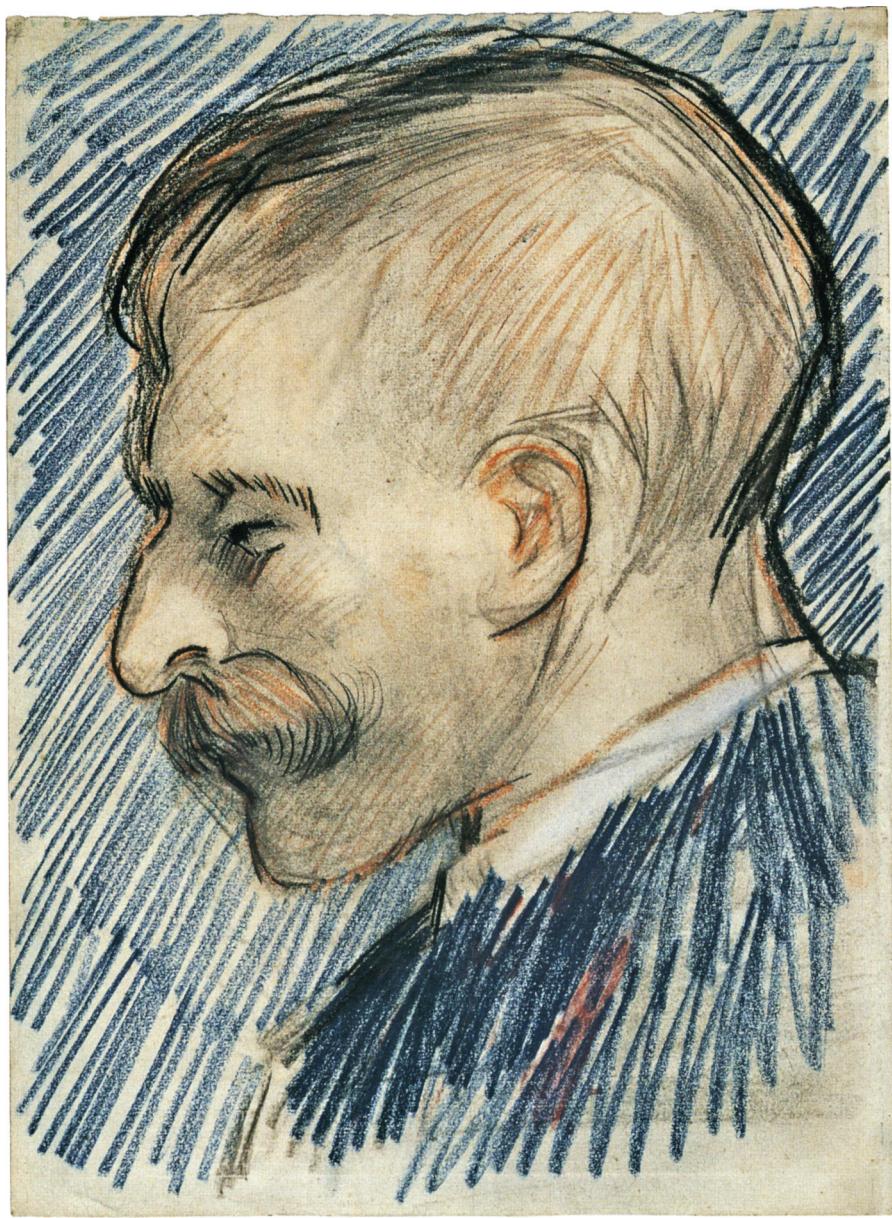
<sup>4</sup> The black chalk of the initial draft was taken for natural chalk in Otterlo 1990.

<sup>5</sup> Arnold 1980 i. This identification was adopted by Hulsker 1992, Heenk 1995, p. 154, and Bailey 1994, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup> Arnold believed that the photograph, which is undated, could have been taken in the period 1886-88. Hulsker 1992 succeeded in dating it to 1878 on the basis of the name and address of the photographer on the mount.



298 Head of a man with a top hat



299 Head of a man (possibly Theo van Gogh)

*7 Other profile portraits are of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec by Louis Anquetin, and of Van Gogh himself by Toulouse-Lautrec.*

It is also known that Theo, like Vincent, had reddish hair, and that corresponds to the colour Van Gogh gave the hair and moustache in the drawing.

One detail that argues against this identification is the straight hair falling forward over the head. Theo had curly hair which he combed back and parted on the left. The hair and long moustache in the drawing give the man a less groomed appearance than the dapper Theo we know from photographs. What is also unusual is the decision to depict the man in profile in this, perhaps the first and only portrait of Theo by Vincent. Portrait sitters are generally shown frontally or from a little to one side.<sup>7</sup>

It is clear, in any event, that there are quite a few points of resemblance to photographs of Theo. If it is him, the dissimilarities might be due to the purpose of the drawing, namely as an exercise in drawing with different colours of chalk rather than a formal portrait. If that was the case, Theo was nothing more than a model ready to hand at home.



298a Photograph of Theo van Gogh, 1878. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



298b Photograph of Theo van Gogh, 1889. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

298 Head of a man with  
a top hat

JANUARY-APRIL 1887

Blue and green chalk on wove

paper

25.8 x 34.9 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 299

Inv. d 17 V/1962

F 1244dv JH 1159

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62

V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent

van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73

on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,

Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent

loan to the Van Gogh Museum,

Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

Tralbaut 1955 III, pp. 23, 34-36,

fig. 19; De la Faille 1970, pp. 495,

656; Amsterdam 1987, p. 444,

no. 2.462; De la Faille 1992,

vol. 1, p. 319, vol. 2, pl. ccxxvi;

Heenk 1995, pp. 152, 153;

Hulsker 1996, pp. 250, 252, 253.

EXHIBITIONS

1955 Antwerp, no. 226; 1955

Amsterdam, no. 126.

299 Head of a man  
(possibly Theo  
van Gogh)

JANUARY-APRIL 1887

Black, blue, orange and carmine  
red chalk, opaque white water-  
colour, on wove paper

34.9 x 25.8 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 298

Inv. d 17 V/1962

F 1244dr JH 1158

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62

V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent

van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73

on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

Tralbaut 1955 III, pp. 23, 36,

fig. 21; De la Faille 1970, pp. 495,

656; Arnold 1980 1; Amsterdam

1987, p. 444, no. 2.461; Otterlo

1990, pp. 33, 183; De la Faille

1992, vol. 1, p. 319, vol. 2,

pl. ccxxvi; Hulsker 1992; Bailey

1994, p. 46; Heenk 1995, pp. 132,

153, 154; Hulsker 1996, pp. 250,

252, 253.

EXHIBITIONS

1955 Antwerp, no. 226; 1955

Amsterdam, no. 127; 1955-56

Liverpool, Manchester &

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, no. 100;

1990 Otterlo, no. 129; 2000-01

Detroit, Boston & Philadelphia,

unnumbered (not in Detroit).

# 300 Woman pianist and a violinist

JANUARY-JUNE 1887

Pencil on wove paper  
13.6 x 20.9 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso: menu of the Grand  
Bouillon-Restaurant Du Chalet  
  
Inv. d 139 V/1962  
SD 1714 JH 1160

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
Tralbaut 1955 III, pp. 23, 38, 39,  
fig. 23; London 1962, p. 56,  
no. 39; De la Faille 1970, pp. 583,  
672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 444,  
no. 2.463; Paris 1988, p. 166;  
Wadley 1991, p. 266; De la Faille  
1992, vol. 1, p. 458, vol. 2,  
pl. CCLIV; Heenk 1995, p. 155;  
Hulsker 1996, pp. 250, 252, 253.

EXHIBITIONS  
1955 Antwerp, no. 222; 1955  
Amsterdam, no. 123; 1962  
London, no. 39.

Van Gogh studied musicians not only in drawings executed with coloured chalks but also in this rapid pencilled sketch. It is not just the drawing material which is different, the paper is as well, for the scene is on the back of a menu from the Du Chalet restaurant.<sup>1</sup>

The robust drawing style with the firm strokes depicting the musicians in colour was also used here, but now combined with the short hatchings described earlier which are oblique to the imaginary contour lines.<sup>2</sup> It is a method that is related to the Impressionist and Neo-impressionist painting technique which Van Gogh was trying to master, and it is also evident in the paintings he made in the first half of 1887.<sup>3</sup> The drawing is accordingly datable to that period.<sup>4</sup>

Curiously, in an unpublished note of 1991 Hulsker associated the style of the *Woman pianist and a violinist* not with that of the other musicians (cats. 293-297) but with a *Portrait of Père Tanguy* (cat. 322), which is also on the back of a menu from Du Chalet but looks more harmonious and firmly drawn.<sup>5</sup> He dated both works to the end of 1887, at the time when Van Gogh was holding an exhibition of his own works and those of his friends in the restaurant. Among his paintings in the show was a portrait of Tanguy.<sup>6</sup>

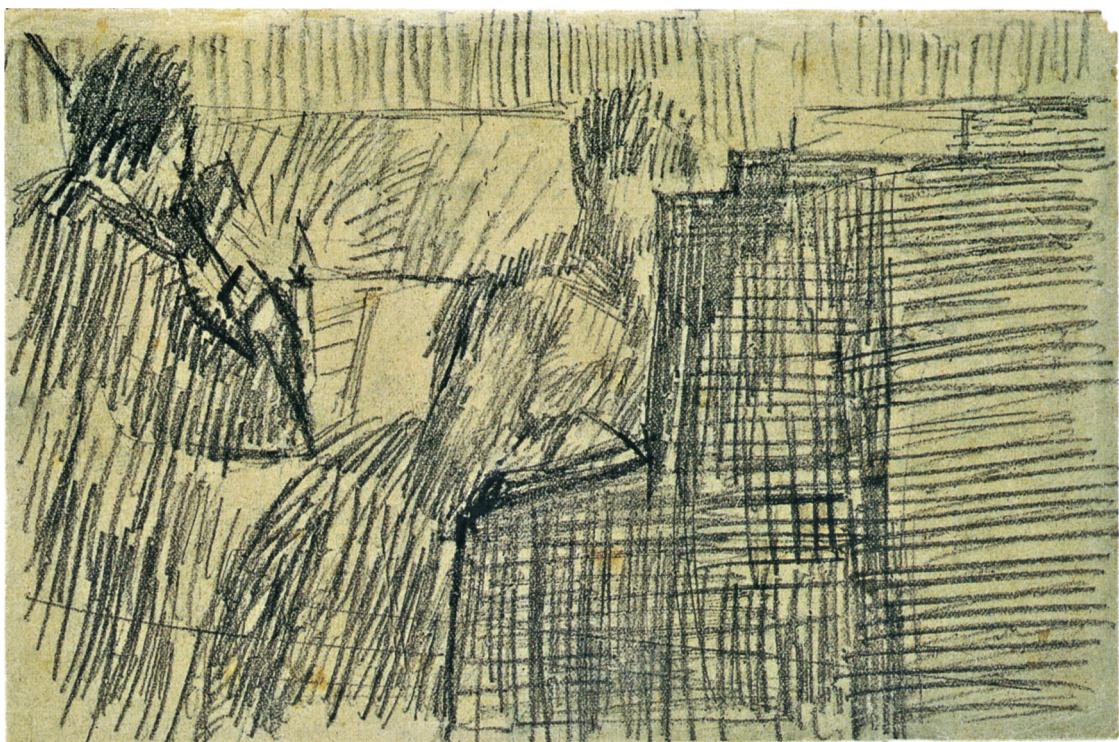
Hulsker did not introduce that revised dating in the most recent, 1996 edition of his œuvre catalogue but, as in the previous editions, placed this drawing and the musicians in the summer of 1886.

More than half of the sheet is taken up with the piano and the woman playing it. Seated to the left of her is a violinist, who is seen diagonally from the back. His sheet music is illuminated by a candle, and there seems to be a similar source of light attached to the piano. It is not visible, but its light falls on the woman's neck.

Welsh-Ovcharov believes that the drawing was made in the ballroom behind the Du Chalet restaurant, because it is on the back of a menu.<sup>7</sup> That is one possibility, but the fact that the musicians were drawn on a menu does not necessarily mean that they were observed in the ballroom.

<sup>1</sup> The bill on the menu is for 1 franc 55 centimes and is written in pencil. Other works on menus from this restaurant are cats. 287, 321 and 322. See cat 287 for the Du Chalet restaurant and this use of its menus.

<sup>2</sup> See *Dying slave and figures at a table* (cat. 283). The same 'hairy' effect can be seen in cats. 301, 302, 303 and 306.



300 Woman pianist and a violinist

*3 Tralbaut 1955 III, p. 39, wondered whether Van Gogh used hatching of this kind to suggest movement or the haziness of subdued lighting.*

*4 This drawing has hitherto always been dated to the summer of 1886. See cats. 293-297 for the reasoning.*

*5 Van Gogh Museum archives, Amsterdam.*

*6 F 363 JH 1351. It was Bernard who asserted that the portrait was in the exhibition, in an unpublished document of 1889 quoted in J. Rewald, Post-Impressionism.*

*From Van Gogh to Cézanne, London 1978, p. 64. See also the Introduction.*

*7 Paris 1988, p. 166. In Archives de Paris, cadastre du No. 43, Avenue de Clichy [D1P4/280], 1876, there is mention of a 'grande salle de bals derrière la maison'. Du Chalet is called a 'bal' in J. Hillairet, Dictionnaire historique des rues de Paris, Paris 1985. With thanks to Nienke Bakker.*

The menu, which also served as the bill, could have been taken by Van Gogh when he left the restaurant. The subjects of three other drawings that he made on Du Chalet menus do not, in any case, indicate that they were made there.

## 301, 302 Female nudes

Van Gogh's use of short dashes is at its most emphatic in two pencil drawings of nude or semi-nude women: *Study for 'Reclining female nude'* (cat. 301) and *Seated woman* (cat. 302). The latter is disfigured by small brown spots.<sup>1</sup> The model in the first sheet is lying naked on a bed wearing nothing but stockings, which reach to just above the knee. Van Gogh paid more attention to her coarse face with its broad nose and thick lips than to the rest of her body, although that is fully detailed in itself. The seated woman, who is only wearing a corset, is dressing, although the diffuse contours make it difficult to say precisely what she is doing. She may be drying her left foot, for there appears to be a towel draped over her left leg. Judging by the altered positions of her right foot, shoulder and breast it seems that Van Gogh initially had difficulty capturing the figure.

The difference in angle of view and the sketchiness of the *Seated woman* make it difficult to say whether the same woman was the model in both works, which can be dated to the first half of 1887 on stylistic grounds. The reclining woman appears to be smaller and more robust than her seated counterpart, whose limbs are quite long. In addition, the latter's face seems narrower and sharper, although that might be due to the contours built up with dashes.



301a Reconstruction of cats. 301-303.

<sup>1</sup> See cat. 306 for a discussion of this style and the dating of drawings in which it was used. The stains are due to mildew in the paper.

<sup>2</sup> It is not known whether Van Gogh used the fourth quarter sheet.

<sup>3</sup> Heenk 1995, p. 154, was the first to note that the two drawings discussed in this entry fit together. She did not, however, realise that cats. 303 came from the same sheet.

<sup>4</sup> See cats. 319 and 320, the paper of which has the same thickness as these two works. The dimensions, too, are similar. The presence of a torn edge and three original cut edges shows that they came from sketchpads.

<sup>5</sup> For this theory see also Heenk 1995, p. 154, where it is suggested that Van Gogh consulted the study when painting the shaded passages, which is indeed also possible. Welsh-Ovcharov, writing in Paris 1988, p. 74, says that the drawing is not a preliminary study but a finished work executed during the same session. She bases this on the existence of other paintings of this model in comparable poses and settings, which leads her to conclude that the paintings must have been executed quickly. However, she overlooks the fact that they could have been made during different sessions and do not appear to have been painted hastily.

<sup>6</sup> There is another painting in which she poses nude, F 329 JH 1215 (Netherlands, private collection), but the style and the form of signature raise doubts about its attribution to Van Gogh.



301 Study for 'Reclining female nude'



302 Seated woman

7 F 328 JH 1212.

8 Lengths of cloth attached to beds can also be seen in several of Bernard's brothel drawings.

9 The self-portrait is F 263a JH 1199.

See Van Heugten 1995, p. 82. Van der Wolk 1988, p. 272, suggests that Van Gogh also made a drawing of the woman in one of his sketchbooks. That model, shown in profile, does have fairly coarse features, but the hairstyle is different, lacking the fringe. V.W. van Gogh, in an unpublished memorandum of 12 March 1971 (Van Gogh Museum archives), wondered whether the woman is the same as the one in F 367 JH 1261. The hairstyle matches well enough, but the sketchiness of the face makes it impossible to say whether the models are the same.

10 Van Gogh mentions a portrait of her in letter 644/510 written on 15 July 1888.

11 Welsh-Ovcharov 1976, p. 225; letter 757/582 was written on 29 March 1889.

12 Such as F 319 JH 1333 and F 381 JH 1355.

13 Bernard's statement is contained in Paul Gachet, *Souvenirs de Cézanne et de Van Gogh*, Paris 1928 [unpaginated]. François Gauzi, a fellow student of Van Gogh's in Cormon's studio, wrote about a study which Van Gogh painted there of a nude woman seated on a piece of blue material. He thought it was F 328 JH 1212, but there the woman is reclining on a cream-coloured bedspread. See F. Gauzi, Lautrec mon ami, reprint with a foreword and annotations by François Daulte, Paris 1992, pp. 28-30.

14 Richard Thomson suspects that Van Gogh was inspired in his choice of model by a painting by Charles Maurin, *Nude woman with black hair* (whereabouts unknown), which was shown at the third *Exposition de la Société des Artistes Indépendants* in the spring of 1887. It generated a great deal of discussion because Maurin did not choose a beautiful young model but a slightly older woman with a paunch and sagging breasts (Thomson in a paper delivered at the symposium Vincent van Gogh and the painters of the Petit Boulevard at Saint Louis, 20 and 21 April 2001).

15 See New Brunswick 1988.

Both drawings were made on a sheet of wove paper which Van Gogh tore into four pieces. *Self-portraits* (cat. 303), with *Sorrowing woman* (cat. 305) on the back, is on another piece.<sup>2</sup> If the *Study for 'Reclining female nude'* is placed face down its bottom edge fits the right edge of *Seated woman*, while the top of the latter fits the bottom edge of *Self-portraits* (fig. 301a).<sup>3</sup> The paper was made by the Canson & Montgolfier factory, as can be seen from the blind embossing, part of which is legible on *Seated woman* and part on *Self-portraits*. Van Gogh used the same brand of paper, but from a sketchpad, for two watercolours executed in the summer of 1887.<sup>4</sup>

The drawing of the woman on the bed is a study for the oval painting *Reclining female nude* (fig. 301b), which is also built up solely with dashes. The model with her broad nose, bushy eyebrows, thick lips and dark, pinned-up hair, her pose and the bed are identical in both works. Van Gogh elaborated the background in the painting, turning it into a piece of material hanging behind the woman, and added a small nightstand by the foot of the bed. The drawing is not a preliminary study in the sense of a rapid sketch in which the artist tries to find the right pose. It is too detailed for that. Van Gogh probably made it as an *aide-mémoire* which he could use to help him finish the painting after the model had left. Working with small dabs of paint was a time-consuming business, and it would have been very expensive to keep the woman posing all that time. The care with which he drew the face suggests that this was one of the areas on which he wanted to concentrate in the painting.<sup>5</sup>

This model posed for Van Gogh on other occasions, appearing nude in another painting and clothed in a portrait.<sup>6</sup> The nude scene shows her from the back with her hair falling down her back in a braid.<sup>7</sup> Although it is not absolutely certain that it is the same woman, her compact body, the colour of her hair and the background of the scene certainly suggest it. As in *Reclining female nude* (fig. 301b), that background consists of a piece of cloth.<sup>8</sup> The woman has her hair pinned up in the portrait (fig. 301c), as she does in this drawing and the related painting. It is possible that Van Gogh painted her on yet another occasion, for beneath the painted surface of one of the self-portraits is a portrait of a woman with a bared breast whose nose, lips and hairstyle are similar.<sup>9</sup>

It is not known who the woman was. It is suggested in De la Faille 1970 that she is Mme Tanguy.<sup>10</sup> However, she was in her late fifties when Van Gogh was in Paris, and further more it is unlikely that she would have been prepared to pose nude. Welsh-Ovcharov associates the portrait with a study of 'a faded woman [...] with such strange eyes' mentioned in the letters 1757/582.<sup>11</sup> Although hardly in the first flush of youth, the woman in

the portrait could not be described as faded, however, and the only odd thing about her eyes is the greenish tinge in the whites. For Van Gogh, though, there was nothing strange about that, as can be seen from many a portrait and self-portrait from the Paris period.<sup>12</sup> Bernard was the only one who gave some hint as to her identity when he said that he knew her, and called her a 'pierreuse', or streetwalker.<sup>13</sup>

The two nude paintings discussed above are the only ones in Van Gogh's œuvre in which he made a stab at the classic theme of the reclining female nude. The subject has a long tradition in western art, so it would be pointless trying to identify visual sources which might have prompted him to choose it. He departed from the tradition with his realistic and unidealised depiction of the woman, but that could hardly be called startling in the 1880s, more than 20 years after Manet's *Olympia*.<sup>14</sup> One suspects that Van Gogh's friendship with Emile Bernard had something to do with the choice of subject. Bernard knew the model, after all, and had been drawing brothel scenes since 1885. The drawings set in brothels which he sent regularly to Van Gogh in 1888, and the discussion of them in the letters, show that they were both interested in the subject.<sup>15</sup>



301b *Reclining female nude* (F 330  
JH 1214), 1887. Merion (Penn.), The  
Barnes Foundation.



301c *Portrait of a woman* (F 357 JH 1216),  
1887. Basel, Kunstmuseum, Öffentliche  
Kunstsammlung Basel.

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301 Study for 'Reclining female nude'

JANUARY-JUNE 1887  
Pencil on wove paper  
24.0 x 31.6 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 133 V/1962  
F 1404 JH 1213

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

van Gogh Foundation (ratified in  
1982); 1962-73 on loan to the  
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;  
1973 on permanent loan to the  
Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 584, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 446,  
no. 2.475; Wadley 1991, pp. 266,  
267; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1,  
p. 459, vol. 2, pl. CCLIII; Heenk  
1995, p. 154; Hulsker 1996,  
pp. 250, 252.

EXHIBITIONS

1962 London, no. 36; 1971-72  
Paris, no. 167.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 125,  
vol. 4, pl. CXLVI; Leymarie 1951,  
p. 99; De la Faille 1970, pp. 491,  
661; Amsterdam 1987, p. 446,  
no. 2.474; Paris 1988, pp. 74, 75,  
no. 18; Wadley 1991, p. 266; De  
la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 125, 364,  
vol. 2, pl. CXLVI; Heenk 1995,  
p. 154; Hulsker 1996, pp. 268,  
270.

EXHIBITIONS

1957-58 Stockholm, no. 51,  
Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund,  
Sandviken & Gothenburg, no cat.  
known; 1988 Paris, no. 18.

302 Seated woman

JANUARY-JUNE 1887  
Pencil on wove paper  
31.4 x 24.9 cm  
Blind embossed: VIDALON-LES  
ANNONAY ♠ ANC<sup>NE</sup> MANUF<sup>RE</sup> CAN-  
SON & MONTGOLFIER, truncated at  
the top and bottom edges

Inv. d 165 V/1962  
SD 1718 JH 1152

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent

## 303, 304 Self-portraits

Most of Van Gogh's 39 self-portraits, only two of which are drawings, were made in Paris. The sheet with *Self-portraits* (cat. 303) contains several sketches in addition to the two self-portraits, for at top right are an eye, a nose and a mouth. The two portraits were first drawn with pencil, the larger one then being worked up with the pen in dark brown ink. The studies of the eye, nose and mouth were executed directly with the pen. Unlike the portraits, which are seen slightly from the side, the separate nose and mouth are depicted frontally.

The paper was part of a larger sheet which Van Gogh tore into four pieces. Two other drawings from it are cats. 301 and 302 (fig. 301a). The full sheet was blind embossed along the left edge with the words VIDALON-LES ANNONAY ANC<sup>NE</sup> MANUF<sup>RE</sup> CANSON & MONTGOLFIER, parts of which can be seen on *Self-portraits* and *Seated woman* (cat. 302). The drawing with the self-portraits and the studies is no longer complete, for a piece of paper measuring 7 x 11 cm was removed at top left. Judging by the lines below the lower torn edge, which are probably part of a beard, there was another self-portrait here. In order to make the paper easier to tear Van Gogh first folded it, creating a crease which extends across the sheet from the horizontal torn edge.

The self-portrait on the other sheet (cat. 304), which is also a view *en trois quarts*, is in pencil. To the left of the face and above the hair are lines from the initial draft. Van Gogh accentuated the final contours, as well as the eyes, nose and mouth. The sketchy lines describing the clothing suggest that he was wearing a smock open at the neck. The drawing is on wove paper which is furrowed at the top, possibly indicating that it came from a sketchpad.<sup>1</sup>

As in cats. 283, 300-302 and 306, Van Gogh used short dashes at right angles to the contours. However, he did so more sparingly than in *Study for 'Reclining female nude'* (cat. 301) and *Seated woman* (cat. 302), restricting himself, very appropriately, to the hairy parts of the face such as the chin and cheeks. The use of this device enables the two sheets of self-portraits to be dated to the first half of 1887.<sup>2</sup>

It is not clear whether these were complete exercises in themselves or preliminary studies for a painting. Because the draughtsmanship is related to Van Gogh's Impressionist and Neo-impressionist painting style it is fair to assume that they served to prepare for a painting. The angle of view suggests

<sup>1</sup> Cats. 318 and 319 also have a furrowed edge, but the size of the ridges differ slightly.

<sup>2</sup> See cats. 300 and 306 for an explanation of this dating.



303 Self-portraits



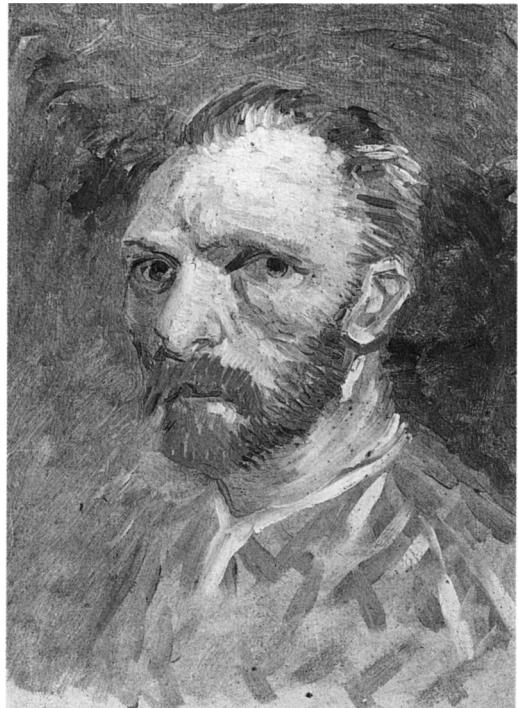
304 Self-portrait

3 In London 1962, p. 60.

4 On this point see the Introduction.

several candidates. The suspicious gaze in *Self-portrait* (cat. 304) is closest to that in one of the small self-portraits which Van Gogh painted on cardboard (fig. 303a). The large, more detailed head in cat. 303 could have been a preparatory study for the self-portrait in Chicago (fig. 303b).

There has been a great deal of speculation as to why Van Gogh made so many self-portraits in Paris. Hammacher came up with a romantic explanation in 1962, reasoning that since Van Gogh was now living with his brother and was therefore not writing him any letters he needed another way of expressing himself, which he did through the medium of a mirror, indulging in self-analysis.<sup>3</sup> Most authors, though, put it down to the supposed lack of models.<sup>4</sup> Another explanation is that Van Gogh made these self-portraits in order to master the rendering of distinctive facial features and to explore Impressionist and Neo-impressionist ideas about the depiction of flesh tones and the influence of shadows on them.



303a *Self-portrait* (F 267 JH 1224), 1887.

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



303b *Self-portrait* (F 345 JH 1249), 1887.

Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago.

### 303 Self-portraits

JANUARY-JUNE 1887  
Pencil, pen in dark brown ink,  
on wove paper  
31.1 x 24.4 cm  
Blind embossed: VIDALON-LES  
ANNONAY ♠ ANC<sup>NE</sup> MANUF<sup>RE</sup> CAN-  
SON & MONTGOLFIER, truncated at  
the top and bottom edges  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 305

Inv. d 432 V/1962  
F 1378r JH 1197

#### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation (ratified in  
1982); 1962-73 on loan to the  
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;  
1973 on permanent loan to the  
Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

#### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 120,  
vol. 4, pl. cxxxix; Bromig-  
Kolleritz 1954, p. 101; De Gruyter  
1961, pp. 102, 103; Erpel 1963,  
p. 57; London 1968, p. 69,  
no. 92; De la Faille 1970,  
pp. 484, 485, 661; Amsterdam  
1987, p. 446, no. 2.471; Paris  
1988, pp. 110, 111, no. 36; Otterlo  
1990, pp. 193, 216; De la Faille  
1992, vol. 1, pp. 120, 358, vol. 2,  
pl. cxxxix; Heenk 1995, p. 154;  
Hulsker 1996, pp. 260, 262, 263.

#### EXHIBITIONS

1953 Zürich, no. 59; 1961-62  
Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo &  
Boston, no. 108; 1962-63  
Pittsburgh, Detroit & Kansas  
City, no. 108; 1963 Humlebaek,  
no. 85; 1964 Washington & New  
York, no. 85; 1966 Paris & Albi,  
no. 30; 1967 Lille & Zürich,  
no. 32; 1967-68 Dallas,  
Philadelphia, Toledo & Ottawa,  
no. 29; 1968 Liège, no. 29; 1968-  
69 London, no. 92; 1969

Humlebaek, no. 14; 1969-70 Los  
Angeles, Saint Louis, Philadelphia  
& Columbus, no. 14; 1970-71  
Baltimore, San Francisco &  
Brooklyn, no. 82; 1971-72 Paris,  
no. 154; 1972 Bordeaux, no. 53;  
1972-73 Strasbourg & Bern, no.  
58; 1976-77 Tokyo, Kyoto &  
Nagoya, no. 48; 1977 Paris,  
unnumbered; 1988 Paris, no. 36;  
1990 Otterlo, no. 164; 1995  
Hamburg, unnumbered.

69 London, no. 91; 1971-72 Paris,  
no. 155; 1975 Malmö, no. 63;  
1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 63;  
1980-81 Stuttgart, unnumbered;  
1981 Utrecht, no. 73; 1995  
Hamburg, unnumbered.

### 304 Self-portrait

JANUARY-JUNE 1887  
Pencil on wove paper  
19.2 x 21.1 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 360 V/1962  
F 1379 JH 1196

#### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation (ratified in  
1982); 1962-73 on loan to the  
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;  
1973 on permanent loan to the  
Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

#### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 120,  
vol. 4, pl. cxxxix; Bromig-  
Kolleritz 1954, p. 101; London  
1962, p. 60, no. 44; Erpel 1963,  
p. 57; London 1968, p. 69,  
no. 91; De la Faille 1970, pp. 485,  
661; Amsterdam 1987, p. 446,  
no. 2.472; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, pp. 120, 358, vol. 2,  
pl. cxxxix; Heenk 1995, pp. 152,  
154; Hulsker 1996, pp. 260, 262,  
263.

#### EXHIBITIONS

1962 London, no. 44; 1964  
Zundert, no. 19; 1966 Paris &  
Albi, no. 31; 1967 Lille & Zürich,  
no. 33; 1967-68 Dallas,  
Philadelphia, Toledo & Ottawa,  
no. 30; 1968 Liège, no. 30; 1968-

## 305 Sorrowing woman

JANUARY-JUNE 1887

Pencil on wove paper  
24.4 x 31.1 cm, framed scene  
21.0 x 14.5 cm  
Blind embossed: VIDALON-LES  
ANNONAY ♠ ANC<sup>NE</sup> MANUF<sup>RE</sup> CAN-  
SON & MONTGOLFIER, truncated at  
the top and bottom edges  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 303  
Inv. d 432 V/1962  
F 1378v JH —

#### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation (ratified in  
1982); 1962-73 on loan to the  
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;  
1973 on permanent loan to the  
Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

#### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 485, 661;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 441,  
no. 2.445; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 358, vol. 2, pl. CCXXXIII;  
Heenk 1995, p. 154.

#### EXHIBITIONS

None.

This sketchy pencil study of a nude woman on the back of the *Self-portraits* (cat. 303) combines elements of two types of figure study from the Etten and The Hague periods. The first shows a man or woman seated in a chair in a mournful pose with the head in the hands and the elbows on the knees (fig. 305a).<sup>1</sup> The second, represented by *Sorrow* (fig. 305b),<sup>2</sup> is a variant of this: a nude woman seated on a rock or tree-trunk and slumped in utter misery with her head sunk in her arms which rest on her knees. The sketch discussed here is particularly reminiscent of *Sorrow*. The woman is seated on the ground, she is nude, and far from idealised. The way she holds her head in her hands, however, was taken from the first type. Her stockings,



<sup>1</sup> The other drawings are F 863 JH 34, F 864 JH 51, F 997 JH 267 (on which Van Gogh based the lithograph F 1662 JH 268, which itself served as the model for F 702 JH 1967, a canvas painted in Saint-Rémy), F 998 JH 269 and F 1069 JH 325.

<sup>2</sup> This is the lithograph which Van Gogh made in November 1882 after exploring the subject in two drawings in April that year: F 929 JH 129 and F 929a JH 130.

305a Sorrowing woman (F 1060 JH 326), 1882. Otterlo, Kröller-Müller Museum.



305 Sorrowing woman

3 See Van Heugten/Pabst 1995, nos. 2 and 5.

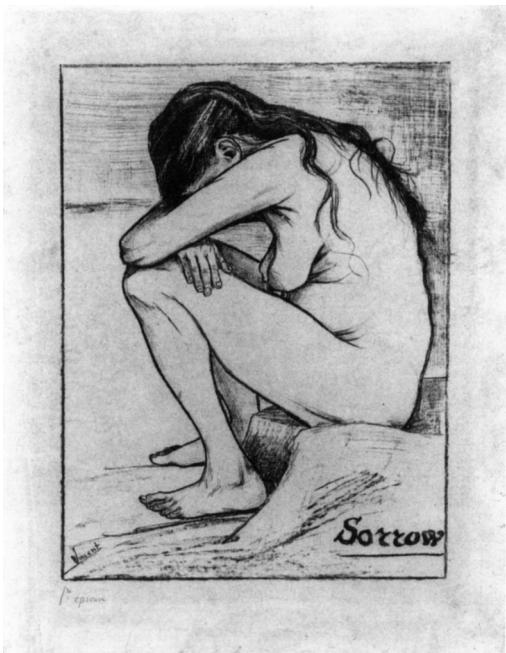
4 Jan Hulsker omitted the drawing from his œuvre catalogue.

which are rolled up to above the knee, are a little out of keeping with the mood of the scene, and add a rather clumsy, frivolous touch.

Works of this kind are Van Gogh's own contribution to a type of motif with which he was very familiar – a man or woman overcome by sorrow and cares – which is regularly found in works of art and magazine illustrations in the second half of the 19th century.<sup>3</sup> It is doubtful that the Paris sketch should be regarded as a serious attempt at a new treatment of the theme. It is too rudimentary for that, and too much of a departure from the subjects which were preoccupying him at the time.

The paper was part of a larger sheet which Van Gogh divided into four pieces (see cat. 303). Two of the other surviving quarter sheets have two studies of women, probably of different models (cats. 301, 302). It is possible that one of them also posed for this *Sorrowing woman*. The drawing is placed in the first half of 1886 in the 1970 edition of De la Faille,<sup>4</sup> but there is no reason to believe that it was made at a different time from the studies for a self-portrait on the other side and the drawings of the women on the other pieces from the sheet. This sketch, too, therefore dates from the first half of 1887.

Van Gogh added some rapid hatching to suggest the support on which the woman is sitting, and added framing lines. The bottom right corner of the sheet is missing and was made up during restoration (see cat. 303).



305b *Sorrow* (F 1655 JH 259), 1882.

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

## 306 Study for 'Woman sitting by a cradle'

The seated woman with her hands folded in her lap was drawn on the same kind of pale grey wove paper as the series of musicians (cats. 293-297) and *Dying slave and figures at a table* (cat. 283).<sup>1</sup> The drawing was a preparatory study for the painting *Woman sitting by a cradle* (fig. 306a).<sup>2</sup> The model with her hair pinned up is posed almost identically in both works, the only difference being that the drawing shows her from a little further to the left. Her face is a bit rounder in the drawing, but its main features in both cases are the large, dark eyes and the small mouth. A few lines to the right of the woman represent the canopy of the cradle, while the left background is divided into areas which match the corresponding passages in the painting. The vertical lines in the chest may be the rough outline of the ribbon which the woman is wearing in the painting.

Van Gogh had difficulty with the folded hands in the drawing. The woman's left hand is at an odd angle to her arm. The fingers are covered by the sketchy right hand, and the fingertips of the left hand are indicated by small squares on the back of the right hand.

One notable feature of this pencil study is the short, angled lines around the contour. This device, which Van Gogh also employed in cats. 283 and 300-303, was associated with the Impressionist and Neo-impressionist painting style which he was trying to master in the first half of 1887, partly under the influence of Toulouse-Lautrec and Signac.

The purpose of the dashes was to blur the outlines of figures and objects (see fig. 306a). Sometimes it was used so intensively that it made the figure merge with the background (fig. 306b). Although successful in paintings, the technique did not work in drawings, leaving the figures looking as if they were covered with hair. Van Gogh only used it in a few drawings, so it is very likely that he was aware of its shortcomings.

In the lower left corner is a sketch of sailing boats by a quayside,<sup>3</sup> which he probably jotted down on one of his regular trips along the Seine in the spring and summer of 1887 to paint at places like Asnières, Clichy and St-Ouen, alone or with Paul Signac.<sup>4</sup> No worked-up version of this sketch is known, either on paper or canvas. It is framed with one

APRIL-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil on wove paper  
34.9 x 25.7 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 297

Inv. d 19 V/1962  
F 1244bv JH 1151

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
Tralbaut 1955 III, p. 39, fig. 24;  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 494, 656;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 446,  
no. 2.473; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 318, vol. 2, pl. ccxxvi;  
Tokyo 1994, pp. 40, 115; Heenk  
1995, p. 153; Hulsker 1996,  
pp. 250, 252.

EXHIBITIONS  
None.

<sup>1</sup> The drawing is on the back of  
Clarinetist and piccolo player (cat. 297).

<sup>2</sup> This was first pointed out in Yasuda  
1994, p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> This was not the only time that Van  
Gogh drew a small, framed landscape on  
sheets used for a large drawing; see cats.  
278, 309, and Appendix 2, no. 2.5.

<sup>4</sup> Signac's recollection of those trips are  
recounted in Coquiot 1923, p. 140. Welsh-  
Ovcharov, in Paris 1988, pp. 13, 14, assumes  
that Van Gogh only worked in Asnières and  
Clichy, but Signac also mentions St-Ouen.



306 Study for 'Woman sitting by a cradle'

light line which runs through the woman's right arm and hand, and a firmer one abruptly truncating the scene on the right.

*Study for 'Woman sitting by a cradle'* was made after the sketch of the sailing boats. If it is assumed that the small sketch dates from the spring or summer of 1887 and that Van Gogh made his Neo-impressionist works in the first half of that year, then the drawing of the woman would come from the spring or summer.<sup>5</sup> Beneath both pencil drawings is an impression left by the *Head of a man (possibly Theo van Gogh)* (cat. 299), so this dating affects the date of that portrait and the series of drawings of musicians (cats. 293-297), which must have been made in the first few months of 1887.

Van Gogh began making portraits in January-February of that year. Many of them are of people he knew, like the art dealers Père Tanguy and Alexander Reid,<sup>6</sup> but there is uncertainty about the identity of this *Woman sitting by a cradle*. In the inventory of Van Gogh's works which Andries Bonger drew up in 1891, no. 311 is described as 'Portrait de la fille du Père Martin (12)'.<sup>7</sup> Pierre-Firmin Martin (1817-1891) was an art dealer and friend of Theo's who had hung some of Van Gogh's paintings in his gallery. Coquiot, writing in 1923, also mentions a portrait of Martin's daughter,<sup>8</sup> and the manuscript of his book shows that he was referring to *Woman sitting by a cradle*.<sup>9</sup> There is no other painting in Van Gogh's œuvre which could be a portrait of the daughter.

The trouble is that Martin had no children. His wife, though, did have a niece, Léonie Rose Charbuy-Davy, whom the couple treated as their daughter. On Mme Martin's death in 1883, Léonie Rose and her family went to live with her uncle. According to Welsh-Ovcharov, it was the niece whom Van Gogh painted,<sup>10</sup> and she sees confirmation of that in the paintings on the wall behind the woman. She also feels that the woman's pose beside a cradle is logical, for she was a young mother.

Léonie Rose did indeed have children, but in 1887 they were two and four years old, so would no longer have slept in a cradle. In addition, they were both girls, and the blue ribbon on the cradle very probably alludes to a boy.<sup>11</sup> On top of that, dealers were not the only people who owned works of art. If this is not Martin's niece then it is difficult to say who she might be. Given the domestic nature of the scene and the fairly luxurious interior, it was more likely to have been an acquaintance of Van Gogh's than a professional model.

Van Gogh regularly portrayed women in a maternal role in his nine years as an artist. As early as Etten and The Hague he was depicting them with children on their laps or sitting beside a cradle. Motherhood is more

<sup>5</sup> De la Faille and Hulsker date the drawing to the summer of 1886, probably on the basis of the similarities between this piece of paper and those used for the series of musicians (cats. 293-297). The winter of 1886-87 was suggested in Amsterdam 1987.

<sup>6</sup> Respectively they are F 263 JH 1202, F 363 JH 1351, F 364 JH 1352 (Tanguy), and F 270 JH 1207, F 343 JH 1250 (Reid). It is known that Van Gogh started painting portraits in January-February 1887 from a letter which Theo wrote to their mother at the end of February (inv. b 906 V/1962). Theo liked the portraits, but was disappointed that Vincent was not asking money for them.

<sup>7</sup> Inv. b 3055 V/1962. The number following the title is a reference to the size of the work. The dimensions of *Woman sitting by a cradle*, 61.0 x 45.5 cm, correspond to that standard size.

<sup>8</sup> Coquiot 1923, p. 147. He said that the portrait reminded him of an early Renoir.

<sup>9</sup> Inv. b 3348 V/1966, Van Gogh Museum archives.



306a *Woman sitting by a cradle* (F 369 JH 1206), 1887. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

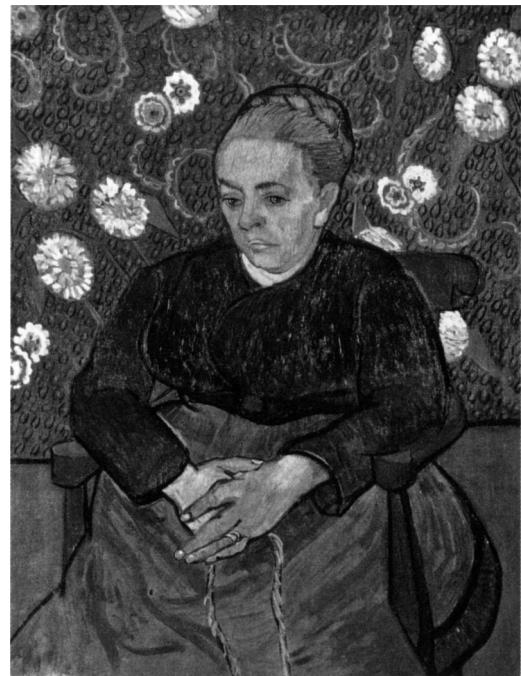
<sup>10</sup> Paris 1988, p. 88. The author gives her surname as Davy-Charbuy, but that should be reversed, because Davy was her maiden name.

<sup>11</sup> The two little girls were Alice (born 19 April 1883) and Germaine Charbuy (born 22 July 1885). With thanks to Monique Nonne of the Documentation Department of the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. That blue is nowadays used for boys in France and pink for girls has been confirmed by the Musée de la mode de la ville de Paris, but it is not known for certain that that was the case in Van Gogh's day.

hinted at than directly depicted in *Woman sitting by a cradle*. Around two years later he heightened this abstraction in his paintings of *La Berceuse*, in which there is not even a cradle in the background to suggest motherhood, merely the cord with which the woman rocks it (fig. 306c).



306b *Portrait of Alexander Reid* (F 343  
JH 1250), 1887. Glasgow, Glasgow Art  
Gallery and Museum.



306c *La Berceuse* (F 507 JH 1672), 1889.  
Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum.

## 307-310 Swift and barn owl

These two sheets with studies of birds on both sides and a drawing with three views of a dead sparrow which was made in Saint-Rémy are the only pure animal studies in Van Gogh's drawn œuvre.<sup>1</sup> There are also two paintings: a large one of a stuffed flying fox which may have been made in Nuenen, or possibly Paris, and a small one of a kingfisher from Paris (fig. 307a).<sup>2</sup>

Van Gogh had plenty of opportunity to study stuffed animals in Nuenen, for not only did he have some specimens of his own, but two of his acquaintances had large collections.<sup>3</sup> That in turn led to the conclusion that he drew the owls and swifts in Nuenen.<sup>4</sup> De la Faille, writing in 1928, believed that the swifts belonged in the Nuenen period but that the owls were drawn in Paris. All four drawings were assigned to Paris in the 1970 edition of De la Faille and by Jan Hulsker, with the owls being dated to 1886 (just the year in De la Faille, with Hulsker placing them more specifically in the autumn) and the swifts to 1887 (the summer, according to Hulsker). Both the barn owl (*Tyto alba*) and the swift (*Apus apus*) are widespread in Europe, so Van Gogh could have studied them just as well in France as in the Netherlands, stuffed or otherwise.<sup>5</sup>

The style of drawing offers few clues to the dating, and there are no drawings which are comparable from a technical point of view, with the combination of pencil, pen and brush and ink. Van Gogh went to great lengths to make the birds look naturalistic. The *Barn owl viewed from the side* (cat. 307), in particular, is drawn with great precision and attention to detail, as is the large swift in *Four swifts with landscape sketches* (cat. 309). As a result of that meticulous, almost pernickety draughtsmanship, particularly in the owl, the drawings lack the loose manner which is often easier to typify and simplifies dating. There are, however, clues in the four pencil sketches, one on the left and three on the right, on the sheet with the four swifts. Although they are only hasty scrawls, it can be seen that the top two on the right are drafts for river views of the kind Van Gogh made in the spring and summer of 1887 at Asnières and other locations along the Seine.<sup>6</sup> In both cases he was looking across the river at the far bank, standing on which were fairly tall houses or factory buildings. The small sketch below them is also a landscape, but apart from a tree-trunk as a repoussoir, and a few small trees

<sup>1</sup> The sparrow is F 1360v JH 621.

<sup>2</sup> The painting Flying fox is F 177a JH 1192; see *Paintings I*, cat. 44, where it is placed in the Nuenen period, with some reservations. The attribution to Van Gogh of a stuffed parrot (F 14 JH 1193) is untenable.

<sup>3</sup> See *Drawings 2*, pp. 17-19, and *Paintings I*, cat. 44.

<sup>4</sup> Van der Hoek 1995, pp. 21-25.

<sup>5</sup> With thanks to Fred Hustings (SOVON Vogelonderzoek Nederland, Beek Ubbergen) and Jelle Scharringa.

<sup>6</sup> Similar views of the Seine feature in cats. 306, 314, and *Appendix 2*, no. 2.5.



307 Barn owl viewed from the side



308 Barn owl viewed from the front

7 Inv. v 42 V/1978.

8 See the Introduction.

9 Van Gogh tried to erase the pencil, leaving some smudges.

in the distance, it is difficult to say what it represents. The sketches were made after the drawing of the swifts, for the graphite from the pencil extends over the ink used for the head of the large bird. This justifies a dating to the spring or summer of 1887 for the drawings on both sides of this sheet.

There is no reason to date the studies of the owls any differently. Like the swifts, they were drawn on a stiff piece of cardboard with paper pasted onto each side. At one stage the cardboard with the swifts was attached to the piece with the owls, making a perfect fit down the left side (as seen from *cat. 308*). The layers of cardboard are visible at the torn edges.

It is unlikely that Van Gogh drew the birds from life. A barn owl would have flown off before he could get close enough to study it properly, and swifts, which dart about high up in the air, rarely if ever set foot on the ground, so would have been completely impossible to draw on the wing. The owl has every appearance of being a stuffed specimen which, as often happened, was mounted on a branch. It is not known whether it belonged to Van Gogh himself. The kingfishers which he painted in Paris were also from a stuffed bird, and one he did own, as it remained in the family and is now in the Van Gogh Museum.<sup>7</sup> The most likely explanation is that Van Gogh drew the owl at the Collège Rollin, which had a large collection of stuffed animals. Van Gogh probably discovered that institute in early 1887 through Paul Signac, who had studied there, and this provides further support for the dating.<sup>8</sup> There is a photograph of a room in the Collège with several of such teaching aids (*fig. 307b*).

The swift may also have been stuffed, but there is no support for its feet. The widespread wings are unusual for stuffed birds, so it is more likely that Van Gogh had come across a dead one while out on a walk and made several sketches of it.

Studies of this kind were probably intended as practice for including small birds in landscapes. The drawing of the four swifts shows Van Gogh already making experiments with this end in view. The large sketch was meticulously executed, first with the pencil and then with the pen and a deep brown ink before a final wash was applied with the brush. The right wing was a little further forward in the pencilled draft.<sup>9</sup> Van Gogh was very successful in capturing the animal's pose and imitating the texture of its feathers. The three smaller birds, though, were done very hastily, without any preparatory pencil sketch, and were given an almost clumsy wash, which is more consistent with the way a detail of that kind would be inserted in a larger composition.

The three small landscapes on the right are in pencil, the one on the

left in orange chalk. The latter is difficult to decipher, but might be of a few figures working on the land. The piece of cardboard was pinned up at some stage, for there are small holes at top left and right.

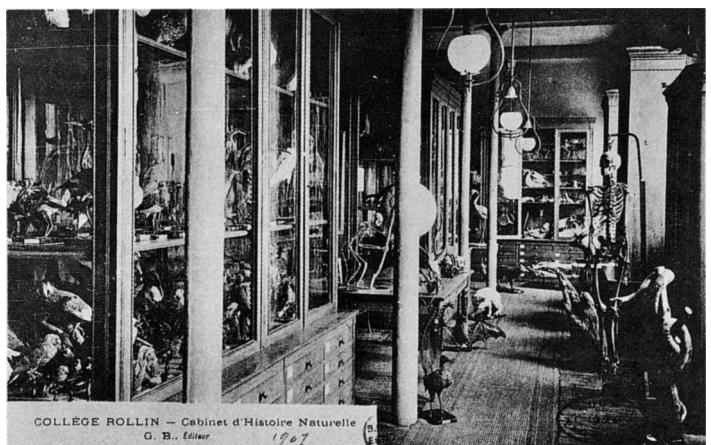
The solitary *Swift* on the back (cat. 310) got no further than the initial pencil draft. Compared to the large sketch on the other side of the sheet, the bird's head is hanging as if its neck has been broken, and Van Gogh may have decided that he could not give it the lifelike look he was seeking.

In *Barn owl viewed from the side* (cat. 307), both the bird and its perch were first roughly pencilled in and then worked up with the pen and dark brown ink. Passages like the wing and the tail were then reinforced with rapid pencilled hatchings which actually add little to the overall effect. This sheet, too, has pinholes in the top corners.

*Barn owl viewed from the front* (cat. 308) was worked up mainly with the pencil, in contrast to its companion on the front of the sheet. The pen and dark brown ink were used to strengthen outlines and details in the tail, claws, wings and head.



307<sup>a</sup> *Kingfisher* (F 28 JH 1191), 1887.  
Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



307<sup>b</sup> Photograph Collège Rollin - Cabinet d'Histoire Naturelle, 1907. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.



309 Four swifts with landscape sketches



310 Swift

307 Barn owl viewed from the side

APRIL-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil, pen in dark brown ink, on wove paper

35.3 x 26.2 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 308

Inv. d 152 V/1962

F 1373r JH 1190

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925 J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62 V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 119, vol. 4, pl. CXXXVIII; De la Faille 1970, pp. 484, 660; Welsh-Ovcharov 1976, p. 182; Amsterdam 1987, p. 446, no. 2.470; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 119, 357, vol. 2, pl. CXXXVIII; Heenk 1995, p. 155; Van Hoek 1995; Hulsker 1996, pp. 256, 260, 261.

EXHIBITIONS

1914-15 Amsterdam, no. 137<sup>3</sup> (possibly cat. 308); 1956 Haarlem, no. 51; 1974 Florence, no. 13.

308 Barn owl viewed from the front

APRIL-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil, pen in dark brown ink, on wove paper

35.3 x 26.2 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 307

Inv. d 152 V/1962

F 1373v JH 1189

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925 J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62 V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent

van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 119, vol. 4, pl. CXXXVIII; De la Faille 1970, pp. 484, 660; Welsh-Ovcharov 1976, p. 182; Amsterdam 1987, p. 446, no. 2.470; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 119, 357, vol. 2, pl. CXXXVIII; Heenk 1995, p. 155; Van Hoek 1995; Hulsker 1996, pp. 256, 260, 261.

EXHIBITION

1914-15 Amsterdam, no. 137<sup>3</sup> (possibly cat. 307).

309 Four swifts with landscape sketches

APRIL-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil, pen in dark brown ink, wash, orange chalk, on wove paper

26.9 x 35.2 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 310

Inv. d 205 V/1962

F 1244r JH 1289

310 Swift

APRIL-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil on wove paper

26.9 x 35.2 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 309

Inv. d 205 V/1962

F 1244v JH 1290

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925 J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62 V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 94, vol. 4, pl. cv; Vanbeselaere 1937, pp. 279, 412; De la Faille 1970, pp. 494, 656; Amsterdam 1987, p. 449, no. 2.490; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 94, 317, vol. 2, pl. cv; Heenk 1995, p. 155; Van Hoek 1995; Hulsker 1996, pp. 286, 287.

EXHIBITIONS

1948-49 The Hague, no. 232; 1951 Amsterdam, no. 58; 1952 Basel, no. 67; 1952 Groningen, no cat. known; 1953 Zürich, no. 45; 1953 The Hague, no. 50; 1953 Otterlo & Amsterdam, no. 88; 1953 Assen, no. 37; 1953-54 Bergen op Zoom, no. 42; 1954-55 Bern, no. 112; 1955 Antwerp, no. 218; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 119; 1956 Haarlem, no. 30; 1957 Nijmegen, no. 34; 1957-58 Stockholm, no. 75, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken & Gothenburg, no cat. known.

## 311 Strollers and onlookers at a place of entertainment

There has never been a consensus as to the subject of this evening scene executed in pencil with a few touches of blue chalk, probably because it is so sketchy. Hammacher took it to be a market scene in Antwerp and dated it 1885-86,<sup>1</sup> and De la Faille and Hulsker followed suit in their œuvre catalogues. Liesbeth Heenk cited the thin paper, drawing materials and style to back her theory that it belongs with a group of drawings made at Saint-Rémy in 1889-90.<sup>2</sup> In 1996 it was suggested that Van Gogh drew it in Eindhoven in the winter of 1884-85.<sup>3</sup>

The paper – a thin, inexpensive wove – could have been bought anywhere, and was a type eminently suitable for unpretentious little sketches of this kind. Nor is the use of pencil and blue chalk any help in dating the sheet. The draughtsmanship, though, does provide something to go on. The almost cursory manner is far removed from Van Gogh's more robust style in Nuenen and Antwerp, and equally has nothing in common with the more stylised sketches he produced in Saint-Rémy. The drawing was almost certainly made in Paris.

There is relatively little with which it can be compared, since Van Gogh had no real reason to keep superficial sketches of this kind. If he felt that they were not interesting enough for a more ambitious treatment they lost their entire purpose, and if he decided that a subject was worth exploring more deeply, and did so, there was little point in keeping the first draft in his portfolio. All the same, he did make a few drawings of a similar, Impressionist nature, such as the *Couple out for a stroll* (cat. 321) and *Woman pianist and violinist* (cat. 300). There are even affinities with a large sheet like *Restaurant De la Sirène at Asnières* (cat. 313), although that is a more painstaking work. Several sketches in the surviving sketchbooks from the Paris period are close to the style of this sheet, most notably a study of a windmill on Montmartre (fig. 311a).

The actual subject fits in well with the Paris period. The structure is probably the covered terrace of a cabaret or the dance floor of a *guinguette*.<sup>4</sup> There is a simple fence between the open space and the street, and those behind it are protected by a large awning. The circles and the star-shaped aureoles show that the interior is lit with bright lamps, the light from which is so strong as to cast dark shadows of the figures standing out on

MAY-OCTOBER 1887

Pencil, blue chalk, on wove paper  
21.1 x 29.5 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 32 V/1962  
SD 1692 JH 993

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
London 1962, p. 46, no. 24;  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 578, 671;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 428,  
no. 2.362; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 451, vol. 2, pl. CCXLVIII;  
Heenk 1995, pp. 192, 271; Van  
Hoek 1996, p. 12; Hulsker 1996,  
pp. 217, 218.

EXHIBITION  
1962 London, no. 24 (as F 1355a).

<sup>1</sup> London 1962, no. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Heenk 1995, p. 192.

<sup>3</sup> Van Hoek 1996, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> See cat. 289 for this kind of *café/restaurant*. Phillip Dennis Cate, who has done extensive research on the depiction of Paris nightlife in the closing decades of the 19th century, confirms that this is the likely setting.

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the street. Several people are standing by the fence looking in. A few of those passing by have tall hats – an item of clothing that is very much at home in a scene of Paris nightlife. It is impossible to identify the specific location. The drawing itself offers no clues, and cabarets and *guinguettes* were found throughout Paris and its suburbs.

All the works which have been mentioned as being stylistically close to this sheet date from 1887, so that is the year now given to this drawing. Because the evening was evidently warm enough for people to go out for a stroll and to put on entertainment on a covered terrace, it seems likely that Van Gogh sketched the scene between the late spring and the early autumn.



311a Sketch in a sketchbook, 1887.

Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



311 Strollers and onlookers at a place of entertainment

## 312 Sailing boat on the Seine at Asnières

APRIL-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil, blue chalk, on laid paper  
53.8 x 39.5 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 353 V/1962  
F 1409 JH 1276

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

Lettres 1911, pl. xli; De la Faille  
1928, vol. 3, p. 126, vol. 4,  
pl. cxlvii; De Gruyter 1961, p. 104;  
London 1968, p. 66, no. 81; De la  
Faille 1970, pp. 492, 493, 662;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 447,  
no. 2.481; Otterlo 1990, p. 22;  
De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 126,  
365, 366, vol. 2, pl. cxlvii; Heenk  
1995, pp. 151, 157; Hulsker 1996,  
pp. 282, 284, 285.

EXHIBITIONS

1914-15 Amsterdam, no. 161;  
1927-28 Berlin, no. 52; 1928  
Vienna & Hannover, no. 52; 1928  
Paris, no. 52; 1948 Amersfoort,  
no. cat. known; 1948 Luxembourg,  
no. 26; 1948-49 The Hague,  
no. 243; 1953 Zürich, no. 69; 1953  
The Hague, no. 58; 1953 Otterlo &  
Amsterdam, no. 96; 1953-54 Saint  
Louis, Philadelphia & Toledo,  
no. 88; 1954-55 Bern, no. 133; 1955  
Antwerp, no. 235; 1955 Amster-  
dam, no. 134; 1955-56 Liverpool,  
Manchester & Newcastle-upon-

Asnières, on the left bank of the Seine six kilometres north-west of Paris, was an attractive little town in the second half of the 19th century. The 1878 Baedeker states that 'it is much frequented as a place of entertainment in the high season. In the summer there are regattas, concerts and balls'.<sup>1</sup> Van Gogh painted a series of landscapes there in the spring and summer of 1887, some of them in the company of Paul Signac.<sup>2</sup> However, drawings of subjects seen there or nearby are scarce. There are several small sketches on sheets devoted largely to other scenes (cats. 306, 309, 314, and Appendix 2, no. 2.5), and two large drawings: this *Sailing boat on the Seine at Asnières* and the next catalogue entry, *Restaurant De la Sirène at Asnières*. Neither of them is a finished sheet which Van Gogh might have hoped to sell. The drawing of the boat is probably a preliminary study for a painting which was either never executed or is lost, while that of the restaurant is a large study of a subject which Van Gogh depicted in two paintings (figs. 313a, b).

There is nothing of Asnières itself to be seen in this drawing. Van Gogh was standing on the bank of the river with his back to the town, with the De la Sirène restaurant behind him and to the right. Chugging along the Seine is a steamboat, which is cut in half by the left edge of the paper. On the far bank is Clichy with its gasworks, the frames of its gasometers being visible behind and to one side of an apartment building. A photograph taken from a balloon on 10 September 1886 gives a clear view of the situation on the ground (fig. 312a).<sup>3</sup>

The sailing boat is of the centreboard type, a modern craft which had been developed in America in the 1840s and became popular in Europe in the ensuing decades. With its fairly broad, short hull, which enabled it to lie on rather than in the water, and a relatively large sail surface, it could reach high speeds.<sup>4</sup>

Alan Bowness thought that Van Gogh borrowed the subject and the composition of the drawing in part from Monet's scenes of yachts on the Seine,<sup>5</sup> and it is certainly true that the nature of the drawing does have some affinity with the river views which Monet painted in 1874. However, it is doubtful that Monet was the actual source of inspiration. Asnières was so popular with day-trippers that there must have been many such boats on the river there, providing Van Gogh with an obvious subject. And if one was to



312 Sailing boat on the Seine at Asnières

Tyne, no. 103; 1957 Breda, no. 46; 1957 Marseilles, no. 40; 1957-58 Stockholm, no. 57, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken & Gothenburg, no cat. known; 1958-59 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland & Seattle, no. 120; 1959-60 Utrecht, no. 77; 1960 Enschede, no. 36; 1960-61 Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg & Toronto, no. 120; 1961-62 Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo & Boston, no. 115; 1962-63 Pittsburgh, Detroit & Kansas City, no. 115; 1963 Humlebaek, no. 92; 1964 Washington & New York, no. 92; 1965 Charleroi & Ghent, no. 59; 1966 Paris & Albi, no. 39; 1967 Lille & Zürich, no. 41; 1967-68 Dallas, Philadelphia, Toledo & Ottawa, no. 38; 1968 Liège, no. 38; 1968-69 London, no. 81; 1971-72 Paris, no. 164; 1975 Malmö, no. 60; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 60.

single out an artist who put the idea into Van Gogh's head, a more likely candidate would be Paul Signac, who occasionally accompanied Van Gogh on his expeditions and whose œuvre is dominated by scenes of boats and ships. Van Gogh made a painting in *Asnières* which is close to the spirit of this drawing, although its subject is a whole row of empty boats on the Seine (fig. 312b).<sup>6</sup> The only other related works in his œuvre are the empty fishing boats on the beach at *Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer*, which he recorded in 1888 in a painting and two drawings.<sup>7</sup>

The composition is successful and almost light-hearted, largely due to the interplay of the lines of the mast, the rigging and the jib-boom jutting out from the bow, and the well-observed perspective of the boat. It has evidently been moored for maintenance work, as the mainsail boom and the sails have been removed, and the mast is not properly stepped but leans backwards slightly in the tabernacle. The latter detail, in particular, indicates that people were working on the boat, for the mast is in a very precarious position and could not be left unattended for long. It may have been the lack of various parts of the boat which made the subject attractive to Van Gogh, as he now had a far less cluttered view of it.<sup>8</sup>

The scene is dotted with colour notations, so it was probably a preliminary study for a painting.<sup>9</sup> This makes it an exceptional work in Van Gogh's œuvre, for there is no other preliminary study that is so large and detailed. It has been suggested that Van Gogh may have been intending to develop

<sup>1</sup> *Baedeker* 1878, p. 287: '[...] très-fréquenté dans la bonne saison comme lieu de divertissement. Il y a en été des régates, des concerts et des bals'.

<sup>2</sup> No attempt will be made to identify the relevant canvases here. This will be examined in detail in the forthcoming second volume devoted to the paintings in the Van Gogh Museum.

<sup>3</sup> It was first published in Martigny 2000, p. 127. With thanks to Ronald Pickvance and Roland Dreyfus.

<sup>4</sup> With thanks to Anton Kos (Zuiderzee Museum, Enkhuizen) and Cees van Romburgh (Scheepvaart Museum, Amsterdam).

<sup>5</sup> London 1968, no. 81.

<sup>6</sup> See Martigny 2000, no. 30. Ronald Pickvance examines subjects of this kind in depth in that catalogue.

<sup>7</sup> F 413 JH 1460, F 1428 JH 1458 and F 1429 JH 1459.

<sup>8</sup> With thanks to Kees Posthuma for these and other technical details about the boat.



<sup>312a</sup> Commandant Freibourg, Photograph of the bridges of *Asnières* seen from a balloon, 1886. *Asnières-sur-Seine*, Municipal Archives.

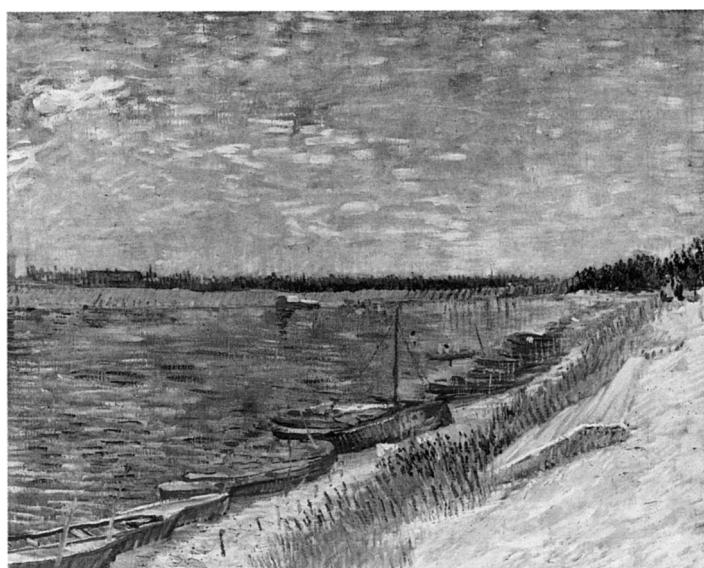
the sheet as a watercolour,<sup>10</sup> but although that cannot be ruled out it is difficult to imagine that he would have gone into so much detail with the pencil if that were the case. It is true that he often used opaque watercolour, but he thinned it so much that it became almost transparent, in which case the pencil lines would have been visible, marring the effect.

Almost all the large or dominant passages have a colour notation in pencil. In the sky to the right of the apartment building he jotted down ' [...] bleu / vermillion', and on the riverbank beneath the trees 'jaune'. The large expanse of water to the right of the boat, just below the bank, has the faint notation 'bleu vert', and below that, more clearly legible, the words 'vert bleu', which are repeated underneath, again indistinctly. In the water by the stern of the boat are the words 'outremer cobalt', at lower left 'celeste orange', and in the boat's shadow on the water 'Violet'. Between the mast and the lefthand stay he wrote 'rose' and 'orange celeste' – colours he was probably planning for the rigging. The bow of the boat is labelled 'bleu', and both the jib-boom and the mast 'orange'. If the painting was ever made, those last two parts of the boat, together with the pink and orange rigging, would have formed a powerful complementary contrast with the green-blue of the water, giving the scene its overall effect. Here Van Gogh was taking liberties with reality, for masts and jib-booms, which traditionally and necessarily have a plain varnish, would never have been orange, and nor would the rigging have been pink and orange.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Pickvance suggested that the unknown painting was one of the two works which Van Gogh gave to the comtesse de la Boissière; see Martigny 2000, pp. 134 and 144.

<sup>10</sup> Heenk 1995, p. 157.

<sup>11</sup> A plain varnish on the mast, jib-boom and mainsail boom would have been necessary because opaque paint would mask any defects in these essential and heavily stressed parts of a boat.



312b *Boats on the Seine*, 1887 (F 300

JH 1275). Whereabouts unknown.

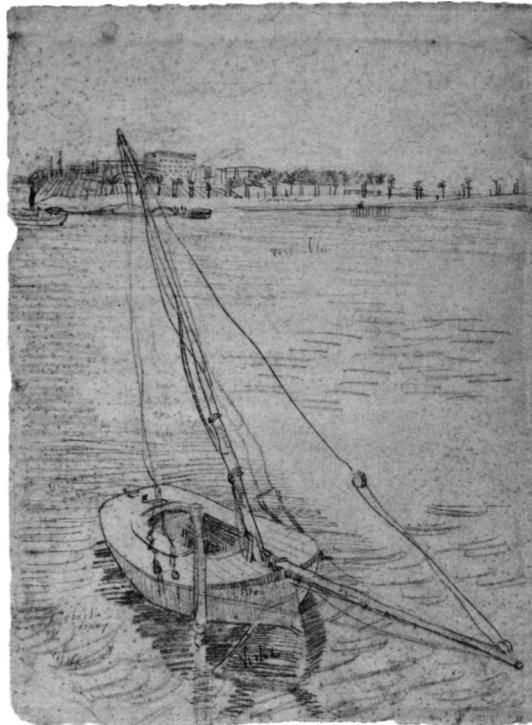
<sup>12</sup> *Foxing is the name for brown spots caused by mildew.*

<sup>13</sup> *De la Faille 1928, pl. CXLVI.*

De la Faille dates the scene to the summer of 1887, while Hulsker places it in the spring of that year. The drawing itself contains no clues, apart from the fact that it was made at Asnières, in other words in the spring or summer of 1887, and that is the broad time span adopted here.

It was executed almost entirely in pencil, which was applied broadly on the left with the side of the point. Only on the right, below the riverbank and just above the boat, is there some blue chalk.

The sheet was badly disfigured by foxing and tears,<sup>12</sup> which must have occurred quite early on, for they are already visible in the reproduction published in the first edition of De la Faille in 1928.<sup>13</sup> The browning of the paper has sapped the contrast in the drawing to a minimum (fig. 312c). It was decided to restore the sheet, which has brought out the drawing and ensured that the spots no longer disfigure it. The drawing is reproduced in its restored state.



312c Cat. 312 before restoration.

## 313 Restaurant De la Sirène at Asnières

For anyone going by coach or on foot from Paris to Asnières in the 1880s, the De la Sirène restaurant was the first building on the right as they entered the small town over the pont d'Asnières.<sup>1</sup> It was owned by Louis Pâté and consisted of three buildings and verandas containing various rooms for different functions, as proclaimed by the signs on its façade, many of which are legible in the drawing. Written on the righthand building is 'RESTAURANT DE LA SIRENE'. There are various announcements on the building in the centre: 'ANC<sup>NE</sup> MAISON SALON POUR [illegible word] / GRANDS SALONS [illegible word] / RESTAURANT ET TERRASSE / MEUBLEE PATE RESTAURATEUR SALONS POUR NOCES'. The illegible word in the first line is visible in the painting which Van Gogh made of the restaurant (fig. 313a) and turns out to be 'NOCES', repeating the statement in the last line, namely that the restaurant contained rooms for wedding receptions.

Van Gogh was standing on the bank of the Seine with his back to the river when he made this drawing. At bottom right is a mooring post for boats. The position is just a little to the right of the one he took up for a painting now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (fig. 313b). That it was not a preliminary study for the painting is clear from the fact that the latter shows far more of the complex. Much of the roof of the lefthand building is missing in the drawing, and the section on the right is rather vague. There is also more of the foreground in the painting, which reveals that the horizontal lines in the grass to the left of centre in the drawing indicate a flight of stone steps.

Although large, the drawing was clearly not intended for sale. In the first place it is too sketchy, and secondly the way in which the dark green chalk was applied over the pencil with rapid, thick strokes and zigzag hatching shows that the sheet was simply an exercise in capturing a subject.

The size of the drawing relates it to the group of four city scenes and the *Window in the Bataille restaurant* (cat. 288) which Van Gogh made in the early months of 1887 (cats. 289-292), and it is on the same yellowed but originally blue-grey laid paper as three of them (cats. 288, 290, 291). It also has the Lalanne watermark found in cat. 291.<sup>2</sup> However, it is much less finished than those works. The dark green in the trees and the grass, and the relationship with the summery scene in the painting, makes it likely that it was

JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil, green chalk, on blue-grey laid paper  
39.8 x 53.8 cm  
Watermark: remnants of Lalanne, truncated at the bottom edge  
Unsigned

Inv. d 357 V/1962  
F 1408 JH 1252

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1931-62 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;  
1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation;  
1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 126, vol. 4, pl. cxlvii; London 1962, p. 62, no. 47; De la Faille 1970, pp. 492, 493, 662; Amsterdam 1987, p. 447, no. 2.480; Feilchenfeldt 1988, p. 130; Paris 1988, pp. 124, 125, no. 43; Otterlo 1990, p. 208; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 126, 365, vol. 2, pl. cxlvii; Heenk 1994, p. 37; Heenk 1995, pp. 152, 243; Hulsker 1996, pp. 278, 280; Martigny 2000, pp. 265, 295, no. 33.

### EXHIBITIONS

1909-10 Berlin, ex catalogue; 1914-15 Amsterdam, no. 132; 1927-28 Berlin, no. 53; 1928 Paris, no. 53; 1928 Vienna & Hannover, no. 53; 1930-31 Arnhem, Groningen, Leeuwarden & Enschede, no cat. known, no. 29, no cat. known,



313 Restaurant De la Sirène at Asnières

drawn several months later than the others, in the summer of 1887. It is tempting to associate the flags with the national holiday of *le 14 Juillet* but there is no evidence to support that, nor is there any sign of festivities, there being not a single figure in either work.<sup>3</sup>

Although the drawing was not made for commercial purposes, it is possible that Van Gogh hoped to sell his paintings of *De la Sirène* to a public consisting of summer visitors to Asnières who had fond memories of the restaurant.

As with many of the paintings Van Gogh made in Paris, the canvas in Oxford has visible assisting lines drawn with the aid of a perspective frame, as well as construction lines.<sup>4</sup> For some reason, though, they are rarely found in the drawings, and that is also the case here.<sup>5</sup>

The fragile, wood-pulp paper has been laid down to reinforce it.

respectively; 1931 Amsterdam, no. 180; 1945 Amsterdam, unnumbered; 1946 Stockholm, Gothenburg & Malmö, no. 38; 1946 Copenhagen, no. 40; 1948 Luxembourg, no. 25; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 242; 1953 Zürich, no. 68; 1953 The Hague, no. 57; 1953 Otterlo & Amsterdam, no. 94; 1953-54 Saint Louis, Philadelphia & Toledo, no. 87; 1954-55 Bern, no. 132; 1955 Antwerp, no. 233; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 132; 1957-58 Leiden & Schiedam, no. 62; 1958 Mons, no. 63; 1958-59 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland & Seattle, no. 119; 1960 Enschede, no. 35; 1962 London, no. 47; 1965-66 Stockholm & Gothenburg, no. 81, no cat. known, respectively; 1971-72 Paris, no. 163; 1975 Malmö, no. 59; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 59; 1988 Paris, no. 43; 1990 Otterlo, no. 156; 2000 Martigny, no. 33.

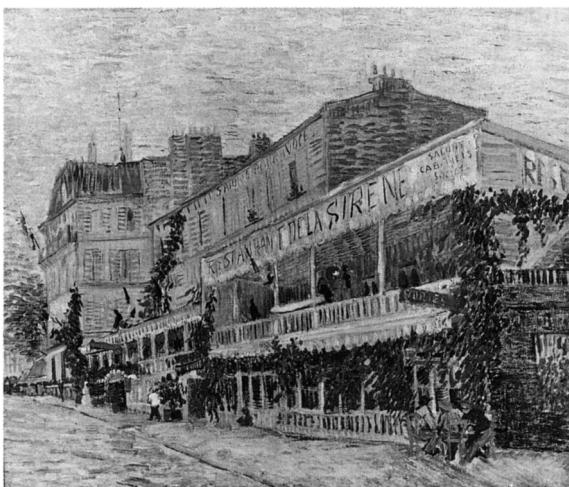
<sup>1</sup> For information about the restaurant see also Paris 1988, cats. 43, 44.

<sup>2</sup> This sheet has only the tops of the l's from the Lalanne watermark.

<sup>3</sup> See also Martigny 2000, cat. 34, and cat. 320 in the present volume.

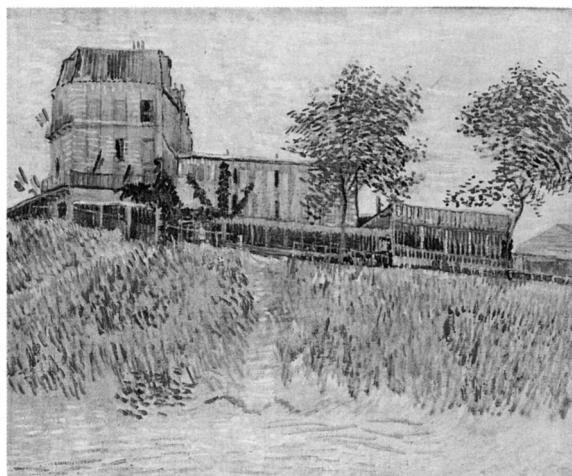
<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>5</sup> See the Introduction.



313<sup>a</sup> *Restaurant De la Sirène at Asnières*

(F 313 JH 1251), 1887. Paris, Musée d'Orsay.



313<sup>b</sup> *Restaurant De la Sirène at Asnières*

(F 312 JH 1253), 1887. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum.

## 314 Apartment blocks and miscellaneous studies

JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil on wove paper  
29.1 x 46.0 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 153 V/1970  
F 1374 / F 1375 JH 1291

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-70  
V.W. van Gogh; 1970 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1970-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 119,  
vol. 4, pl. cxxxviii; De la Faille  
1970, pp. 484, 550, 551, 661;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 449,  
no. 2.487, p. 453, no. 2.515;  
Thomson 1987, p. 24; Otterlo  
1990, p. 22; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, pp. 119, 357, vol. 2, pl.  
cxxxviii; Heenk 1995, p. 151;  
Hulsker 1996, pp. 286, 287.

EXHIBITIONS  
None.

This sheet was folded in two at some stage, as was the one with studies of the Paris ramparts on both sides (cats. 315, 316). The paper is the same in each case, and the identical shapes of the water stains on both shows that they were originally inserted into each other to form an improvised sketch-book.

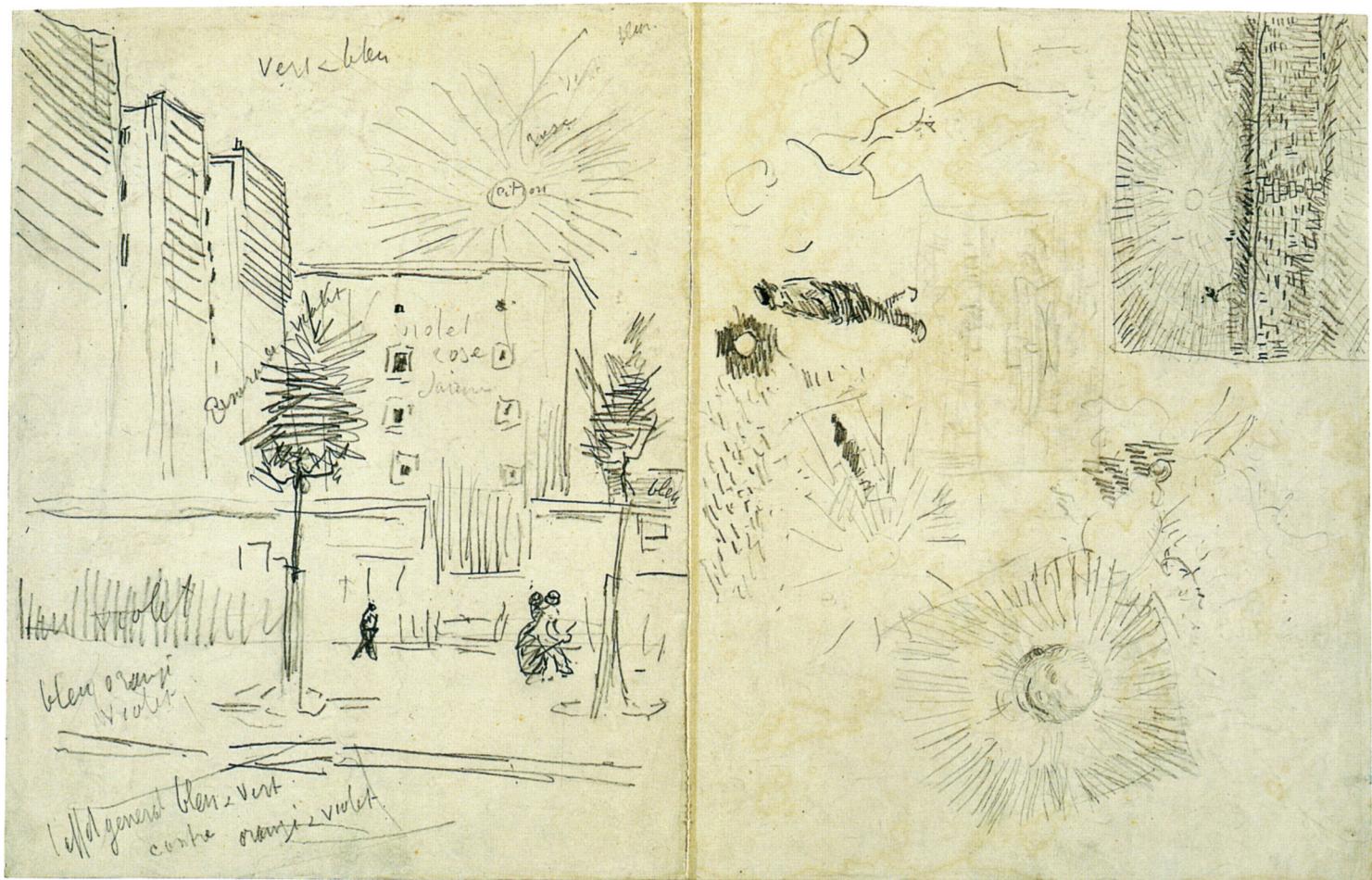
There has never been any dispute about the dating of the left half of this present sheet. It is assigned to the summer of 1887 in De la Faille 1970, by Hulsker, and in the Van Gogh Museum's own catalogue of its collection published in 1987. There has been more confusion, though, about the dating of the various sketches on the right half.<sup>1</sup> Hulsker omitted it altogether, while the authors of the 1987 catalogue place it in the summer of 1888. The editors of De la Faille 1970 noted that De la Faille himself had dated it to Paris 1886 in the manuscript for the latest edition of his book,<sup>2</sup> but they disagreed and shifted it to Saint-Rémy 1889. They gave no reasons for doing so, but it was probably because of the small sketch of a wall with the sun shining down at top right. It seems that this was taken for the wall around the wheatfield at the asylum of Saint-Paul-de-Mausole in Saint-Rémy, which features in several drawings and paintings from that period. That identification is incorrect. As Richard Thomson pointed out in 1987, this is one of the bastions in the Paris ramparts, as can be seen from the distinctive shape of the angle in the wall and the vegetation growing on top of it.<sup>3</sup> Thomson also identified the sketch which Van Gogh largely erased in the middle of the right half as a small study for a painting made at Asnières (fig. 314a). Going by the periods when Van Gogh was working on the *fortifications* and at Asnières (see cats. 312, 313), the most likely dating for the entire sheet is the summer of 1887.

The site of the apartment buildings on the left has not been established. Clearly, though, they are in the course of construction, for they have eaves but as yet no roofs. With their flat tops and lack of chimney pots they look strikingly modern to our eyes, but that kind of architecture was unknown in Paris in the late 19th century. The drawing itself contains no clues as to the location. Montmartre, where Van Gogh lived, was growing rapidly, but new buildings were also going up in the suburbs of Clichy and Asnières.

<sup>1</sup> De la Faille treated the two halves of the sheet as individual works and gave them separate numbers.

<sup>2</sup> See the 'Editors' comment' on F 1375, p. 551. They do not mention the date De la Faille gave to the other half of the sheet in his manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> Thomson 1987, pp. 24, 25.

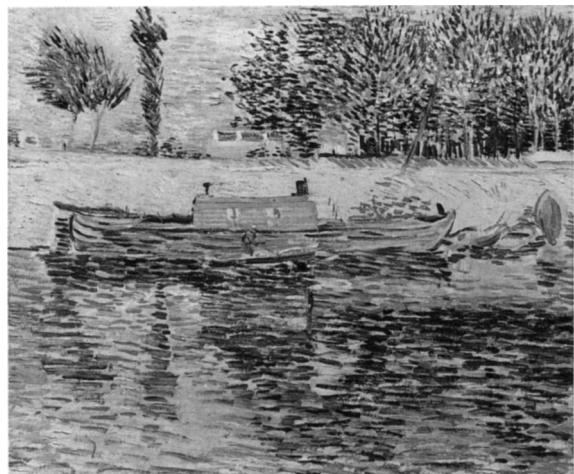


314 Apartment blocks and miscellaneous studies

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The scene of the buildings is a preliminary study in pencil for a painting or watercolour, and like *Sailing boat on the Seine at Asnières* (cat. 312) has very detailed colour notations. Van Gogh could not have intended to work up this particular sheet with watercolour, for the paper is too thin, and no such painting or watercolour is known. The words in the middle of the sky in the study are 'vert & bleu', and on the right 'vert', 'bleu' and 'rose'. The sun was to be 'citron'. Written on the façade of the building on the right are 'violet', 'rose' and 'jaune', above the tree on the left 'Emeraude & violet', and to the right of the other tree, just above the wall, 'bleu'. On the wall, in the hatched area on the left, is the word 'violet'. The pavement immediately below this is labelled 'bleu', 'orange' and 'violet'. Broadly speaking, the colour composition was to form a complementary contrast, as is confirmed by the annotation at the bottom of the sheet: 'effet général bleu & vert contre orange et violet'.

All the sketches on the right half of the sheet are likewise in pencil. Before drawing them Van Gogh turned the sheet 90 degrees relative to the apartment blocks. In addition to the framed bastion and the boat on the Seine there are the outlines of a man and a woman at top right, to the left of them a man in a hat out walking, and a sun or a moon. To the left of the man is a sketchy sun, with beneath it another sun, partly framed and with a cartoon-like face. To the left of the bastion is another female figure.



314<sup>a</sup> *Boat by the bank of the Seine* (F 353  
JH 1271), 1887. Whereabouts unknown.

## 315, 316 Studies of the Paris ramparts

In Van Gogh's day Paris was surrounded by the *fortifications*, a defensive wall more than 30 kilometres long with gates and barracks (fig. 315a). Today the boulevard périphérique follows the same route around the city. The wall was built between 1841 and 1845 and had no fewer than 94 bastions, more than 20 of them with barracks attached. A broad, deep canal ran the entire length of the fortifications, and beyond that there was a swathe of land 250 metres wide where building was prohibited. There were 52 gates in ramparts.<sup>1</sup>

Van Gogh made seven drawings of these defences, four of which he worked up into finished watercolours.<sup>2</sup> The three pencil drawings discussed in this entry, which are on both sides of a single sheet, depict the scenes in broad outline only. It is unlikely that Van Gogh intended making watercolours of them as well, for the paper is too smooth and thin.

It is not entirely clear why he made these drawings. He may have been searching for a suitable composition for a painting, although there are no known canvases of the subject. However, there are clear parallels with the three watercolours. For example, the lower of the *Two studies of the Paris ramparts* (cat. 315) is very similar to the watercolour *The ramparts of Paris* (fig. 315b), while the drawing at the top closely resembles the *Road running beside the Paris ramparts* (cat. 317). The ramparts and the building in *Study of the Paris ramparts* (cat. 316) also feature in *The ramparts of Paris* (fig. 315c), but seen from a different angle. Van Gogh probably made the pencil drawings in order to find a good composition for the watercolours, and it is worth noting that this is the only time he ever made drawings in preparation for other works on paper.<sup>3</sup>

The bright tones of the watercolours combined with the thick foliage of the trees, the green grass, the women with parasols and the men lying in the shade show that they were executed in the summer, which is when the pencil studies must also have been made.

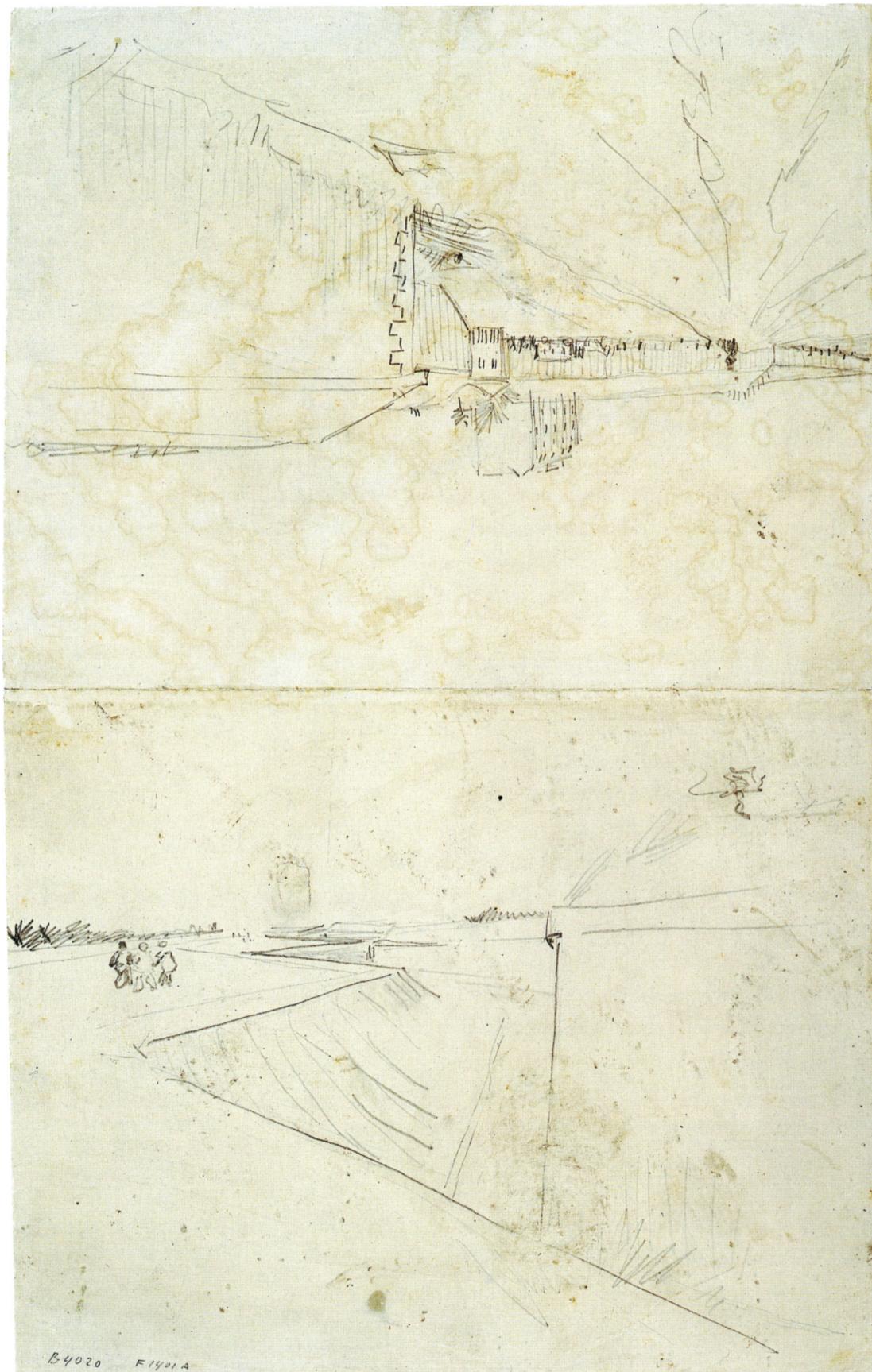
It is not surprising that Van Gogh wanted to explore the difficult perspective of the angular ramparts in pencil studies first. What is strange, though, is that he drew them freehand, without the aid of a perspective frame. In only one of the watercolours (cat. 318) are there lines that betray its use.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The information on the fortifications comes from J. Bastié, *La croissance de la banlieue parisienne*, Paris 1964, pp. 178, 179, and J. Flourens, *Les fortifications de Paris. Leur histoire, leur désaffection future et ses conséquences*, Paris 1908, pp. 21, 22.

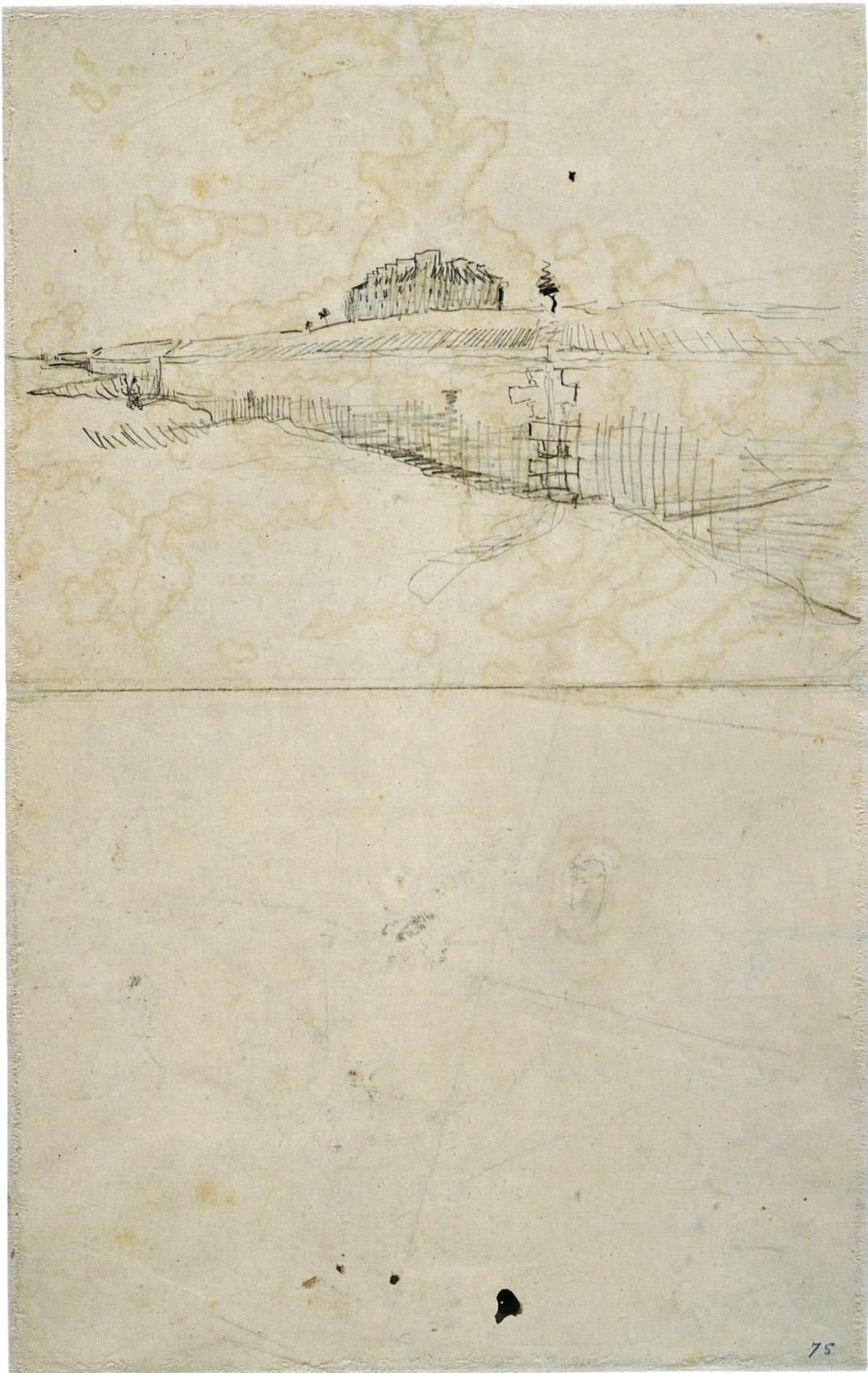
<sup>2</sup> Two of the four are in the Van Gogh Museum: cats. 317 and 318. The other two are F 1402 JH 1280 (fig. 315b) and F 1403 JH 1281 (fig. 315c).

<sup>3</sup> Heenk 1995, p. 151.

<sup>4</sup> See the Introduction for Van Gogh's use of a perspective frame in Paris.



315 Two studies of the Paris ramparts



316 Study of the Paris ramparts

75

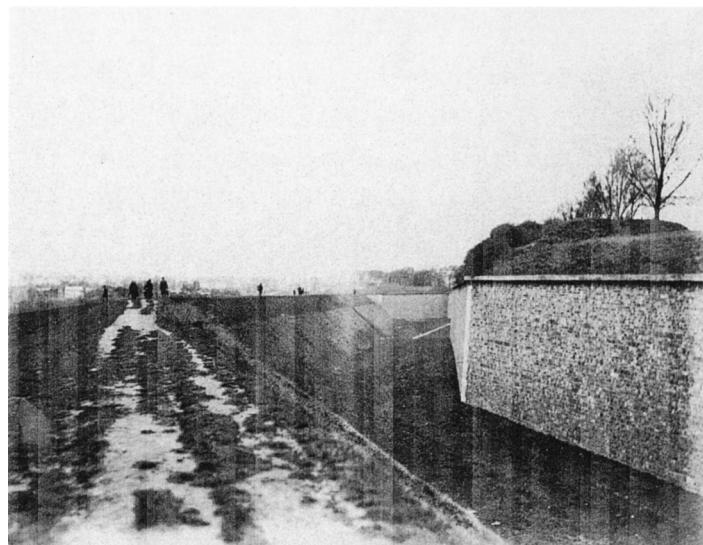
<sup>5</sup> See also cats. 228, 229 on the subject of Van Gogh's home-made sketchbooks. Thomson 1987, p. 17, incorrectly states that the drawings are on two sheets which were torn from a sketchbook but are still attached to each other.

<sup>6</sup> See cat. 317 for the reasoning behind this identification.

The three studies are on a single sheet of thin wove paper which Van Gogh folded in two to provide four sides. Each drawing measures approximately 23 x 29 cm. He used the same kind of paper for *Apartment blocks and miscellaneous studies* (cat. 314). On that sheet, which is also folded across the middle, he added several small sketches, including one of a bastion. It can be concluded from the identical shape of the water stains on both sheets that they came from a sketchbook which Van Gogh made himself.<sup>5</sup> They probably fell onto the ground while he was working out of doors. In addition to the stains, the sheet with the studies of the ramparts is creased, has indentations left by grains of sand, and a right-angle tear which has since been restored.

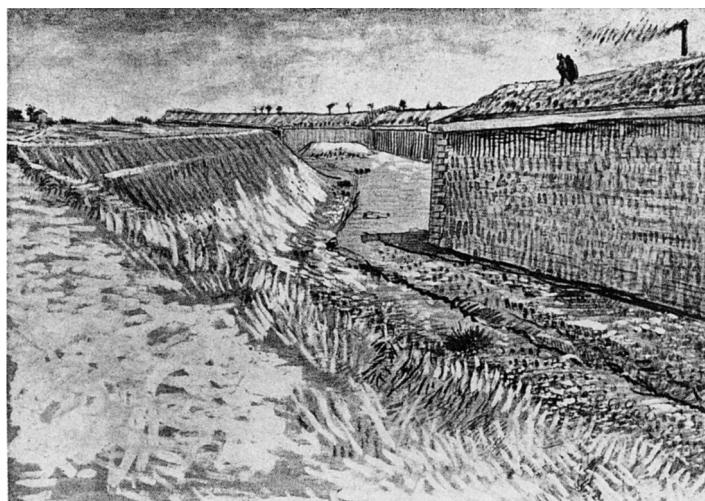
The main subject of the lower half of cat. 315 is the zigzag canal running alongside the ramparts. There is a tree on top of the bastion, and three small figures walking on the left bank of the canal. The absence of buildings makes it impossible to identify the specific location.

The sketch above, which is upside down relative to the other one, is more detailed. There the emphasis is not so much on the canal as on the rampart wall, which can be identified as the stretch near the Porte de St-Ouen.<sup>6</sup> The gate itself is hidden by the tollhouse built up against the ramparts. To the left of it, on the road leading into the city, is a horse-drawn tram. A tall building towers over the ramparts on the horizon.



315a H. Roger Viollet, photograph of the Paris ramparts, c. 1900. Toronto, B. Welsh-Ovcharov.

For the third study Van Gogh chose a spot looking directly at one of the bastions. He did not succeed in capturing the perspective of the angle in the wall correctly. To the left of the canal he sketched a small figure which is almost swallowed up by the hatching. Behind the rampart is a large building with a row of large chimneys. This is one of the barracks which were dotted along the fortifications, but the absence of roads or gates makes it impossible to identify.



315b *The ramparts of Paris* (F 1402

JH 1280), 1887. London, Private collection.



315c *The ramparts of Paris* (F 1403

JH 1281), 1887. Manchester, Whitworth Art Gallery.

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315 Two studies of  
the Paris ramparts

JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil on wove paper

46.0 x 29.2 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 316

Inv. d 142 V/1962

SD 1719r JH 1279 / JH 1282

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 584, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 448,  
no. 2.484; Thomson 1987, pp. 17,  
18; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 459,  
vol. 2, pl. CCLIV; Heenk 1995,  
p. 151; Hulsker 1996, pp. 284,  
286, 287.

EXHIBITION

1956 Haarlem, no. 56.

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 584, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 448,  
no. 2.483; Thomson 1987, pp. 17,  
18; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 459,  
vol. 2, pl. CCLIV; Heenk 1995,  
p. 151; Hulsker 1996, pp. 284-86.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

316 Study of the Paris  
ramparts

JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil on wove paper

46.0 x 29.2 cm, the scene

22.9 x 29.2 cm

Unsigned

Verso of cat. 315

Inv. d 142 V/1962

SD 1719v JH 1285

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

## 317 Road running beside the Paris ramparts

The fortifications around Paris had become militarily obsolete by the 1880s, and there were calls for them to be demolished, not least because they were preventing the city from expanding, causing overcrowding and forcing up land prices.<sup>1</sup> The overgrown ramparts had become a popular recreational area for the working class on Sundays and public holidays. By night they were the haunt of criminals and prostitutes.

Various aspects of the city's defences feature in the literature and visual arts of the period.<sup>2</sup> Alphonse Daudet, Guy de Maupassant and the De Goncourts, writers whom Van Gogh admired, used them as settings in their novels, while artists like Charles Angrand, Jean-Louis Forain, Jean-François Raffaëlli and Lucien Pissarro depicted them in paintings, drawings and illustrations. Van Gogh himself owned an engraving of a nocturnal scene by the fortifications.<sup>3</sup> He may have been inspired to draw the ramparts by works of this kind, but he knew them above all from his walking trips to Asnières, Clichy and St-Ouen.

Two of the four watercolours which Van Gogh made of the ramparts in the summer of 1887 are in the collection of the Van Gogh Museum:<sup>4</sup> *Gate in the Paris ramparts* (cat. 318) and this *Road running beside the Paris ramparts*.<sup>5</sup> Three of the four are views along the ramparts, and are very similar in size, type of paper, drawing materials and composition, and were probably conceived as a series.<sup>6</sup>

*Road running beside the Paris ramparts* is a superb evocation of a warm summer day. Some of the figures on the road are carrying parasols, and three people are taking an afternoon nap in the drained canal, where they are shaded by the wall. Van Gogh based the composition on the top half of cat. 315. There the fortifications extend across the full width of the sheet, but for the watercolour Van Gogh turned away from the wall a little, with the result that it no longer closes the composition off, thus creating a greater sense of depth. As in the study, there is a tollhouse at the gate in the access road, as well as a horse-drawn tram and a few small figures.

Van Gogh's first draft for this finished sheet was in pencil, and judging by the free manner of execution the entire drawing was made out of doors.<sup>7</sup> He then added colour with blue, green and white watercolour and five different chalks. The lead white with which he mixed the watercolour for the sky

JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil, transparent and opaque watercolour, yellow, green, orange, ochre and blue chalk, brush in blue (oil?) paint, pen in blue ink, on laid paper  
39.7 × 53.8 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 355 V/1962  
F 1400 JH 1283

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925 J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62 V.W. van Gogh; 1931-62 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, pp. 123, 124, vol. 4, pl. cxlv; De la Faille 1970, pp. 490, 661; Amsterdam 1987, p. 448, no. 2.485; Thomson 1987, pp. 17-20, 23-25; Paris 1988, p. 134; Otterlo 1990, pp. 39, 210, 228; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 123, 124, 363, vol. 2, pl. cxlv; Heenk 1994, p. 37; Heenk 1995, pp. 150, 151, 243; Hulsker 1996, pp. 284, 286.

EXHIBITIONS

1896 Paris, no cat. known [not for sale]? (possibly cat. 318); 1905 Amsterdam 1, no. 350 [Dfl. 250]; 1912 The Hague & Amsterdam, no. 33 (for sale)?; 1914-15 Amsterdam, no. 126; 1923 Rotterdam, no. cat. known; 1927-28 Berlin, no. 51; 1928 Vienna & Hannover, no. 51;

1928 Paris, no. 51; 1929 Amsterdam, no. 43; 1931 Amsterdam, no. 181; 1937 Paris, no. 67; 1937 Oslo, no. 27; 1938 Copenhagen, no. 18; 1945 Amsterdam, unnumbered; 1946 Copenhagen, no. 35; 1946-47 Liège, Brussels & Mons, no. 44; 1947 Paris, no. 44; 1947 Geneva, no. 45; 1948 Amersfoort, no cat. known; 1948 Hilversum, no cat. known; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 238; 1949-50 New York & Chicago, no. 64; 1953 Zürich, no. 64; 1953 The Hague, no. 53; 1953 Otterlo & Amsterdam, no. 92; 1953-54 Saint Louis, Philadelphia & Toledo, no. 89; 1954-55 Bern, no. 129; 1955 Antwerp, no. 236; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 135; 1955-56 Liverpool, Manchester & Newcastle-upon-Tyne, no. 104; 1957 Breda, no. 47; 1957 Marseilles, no. 41; 1957-58 Stockholm, no. 55, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken & Gothenburg, no cat. known; 1960-61 Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg & Toronto, no. 121; 1961-62 Liège & Breda, no. 57; 1963 Paris, no. 30; 1963 Humlebaek, no. 88; 1964 Washington & New York, no. 88; 1965-66 Stockholm & Gothenburg, no. 82, no cat. known, respectively; 1967 Wolfsburg, no. 102; 1971-72 Paris, no. 160; 1975 Malmö, no. 58; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 58; 1982 Amsterdam, no catalogue; 1990 Otterlo, no. 158.

<sup>1</sup> Thomson 1987, p. 20. *The fortifications were only torn down after the First World War.*

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed survey see Thomson 1987, pp. 21-22.

<sup>3</sup> 'Escaping from Paris by night', *The Graphic*, 6 May 1871, p. 424; inv. t 675 V/1962.

<sup>4</sup> See cats. 315 and 316 for the reasons behind this dating.

<sup>5</sup> The other two watercolours, F 1402 JH 1280 (fig. 315b) and F 1403 JH 1281 (fig. 315c), were originally part of the fam-

and the foreground has oxidised, creating black blotches. A fine brush and blue paint were used to strengthen the outlines of certain elements like the angle of the bastion, the tram and the tollhouse. The paint looks like watercolour but has penetrated the paper leaving greasy stains on the back, so Van Gogh may have used thinned oil paint (fig. 317a). Contours, most notably those of the small figures in the middleground, were also accentuated with the pen and blue ink.<sup>8</sup>

Van Gogh painted first with watercolour, both opaque and transparent, and then used chalk to add further touches of colour. He adopted a different approach for the road, which is the most striking passage in the scene, with its light colour and dashing strokes. Here he first worked with orange chalk but was evidently unhappy with the result, for he overpainted it with an opaque white watercolour in more or less the same shade as the paper. When it was dry he worked on it with lemon-yellow chalk. The paper has browned severely, making the white paint look very light. There would also originally have been far less of a contrast between the light blue passages and the bare paper in the sky.

The paper which Van Gogh used for this and other watercolours was not really suitable for the medium.<sup>9</sup> Watercolour paper is usually thick and absorbent, but this sheet is so thin that there are now several holes in it.<sup>10</sup> Fragments of swash lettering visible at the edge are from the Lalanne watermark.<sup>11</sup>

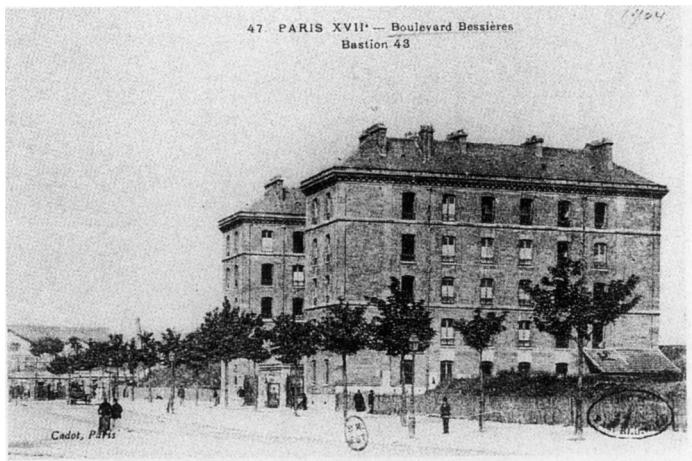
Since Thomson's publication in 1987 it has been assumed that Van Gogh made his drawings of the ramparts near the Porte de Cligny, on the



317a Reverse of cat. 317.

north-west side of Paris.<sup>12</sup> He passed through it, after all, on his painting and sketching trips to Clichy and Asnières. The large building with the row of chimneys is supposedly the barracks on Bastion 43, to the left of the access road (fig. 317b), with the wall and trees on the left belonging to the Cimetière des Batignolles. However, there were more than 20 bastions with similar barrack buildings, and in addition the walled cemetery lay to the north of the Porte de Clichy, not opposite it.

There are several reasons for believing that Van Gogh took up a position not near the Porte de Clichy but near the more northerly entrance to Paris, the Porte de St-Ouen.<sup>13</sup> The most important is the fact that the barracks is flanked by two lower buildings with orange pitched roofs. The only matching building on the fortifications was the Hôpital Bichat, which stood on the bastion near the Porte de St-Ouen (fig. 317c).<sup>14</sup> The hospital had been housed in the former barracks since 1879.<sup>15</sup> It is not known when the four low buildings were added, but a drawing of 1882 shows that they were there by the time Van Gogh drew the scene (fig. 317d). The factory chimneys on the horizon to the left of the building were within the city walls, and may have stood on a site behind the Porte de la Chapelle St-Denis. The walled site to the left of the road has not been identified. That this is indeed the Porte de St-Ouen is confirmed by the direction of the shadows. The figures with parasols and the people napping in the old canal suggest that Van Gogh was working during the hottest part of the day, when the sun was in the south, casting shadows to the north.



317b Photograph of the barracks on Bastion 43, 1904. Toronto, B. Welsh-Ovcharov.

ily collection, but were sold in 1912 and 1927 respectively. Thomson 1987, p. 17, also counted F 1410 JH 1286 (fig. 320a) among the drawings made near the ramparts, but in fact it is a panoramic view seen from Montmartre; see Paris 1988, pp. 138, 139, and Martigny 2000, p. 293.

6 The exception is cat. 318. We have not examined the two watercolours outside the Van Gogh Museum, but have used the data in Heenk 1995, p. 150.

7 Thomson 1987, p. 17, cites the finished appearance of the watercolours to support his theory that they were made in the studio.

8 Thomson 1987, p. 17, wrongly believes that the scene was laid down with black chalk and that a sharp pencil was used to accentuate certain passages.

9 According to Heenk 1995, p. 150, Van Gogh used the same paper for F 1402 JH 1280, F 1403 JH 1281 and F 1410 JH 1286. See also note 4.

10 The paper of the pencil studies (cats. 315, 316) was totally unsuitable, being only half as thick as that of Road running beside the Paris ramparts. Thomson 1987, p. 17, thought that it was thick watercolour paper.

11 Heenk 1994, p. 37, identified the paper as Glaslan on the evidence of the lettering. Similar swash letters were found in the paper of cats. 291 and 313. These vestiges were compared with the complete Lalanne watermark in the paper of cats. 250 and 275.

12 Thomson 1987, pp. 18 and 20; Paris 1988, p. 134; Heenk 1994, p. 37; Heenk 1995, p. 150; Martigny 2000, p. 293.

13 Thomson 1987, p. 18, considers it unlikely that Van Gogh depicted the Porte de St-Ouen for two reasons. First, because there is no evidence that he ever worked so far north in Paris, and secondly because the angle at which the road approached the gate in reality did not correspond to the depiction. The angle of approach in the drawing, however, is impossible to make out, and although there are no extant works from St-Ouen, we know from Paul Signac that Van Gogh certainly worked there. On this point see Coquiot 1923, p. 140.

14 With thanks to André Roussard and Gérard Jouhet.



317 Road running beside the Paris ramparts

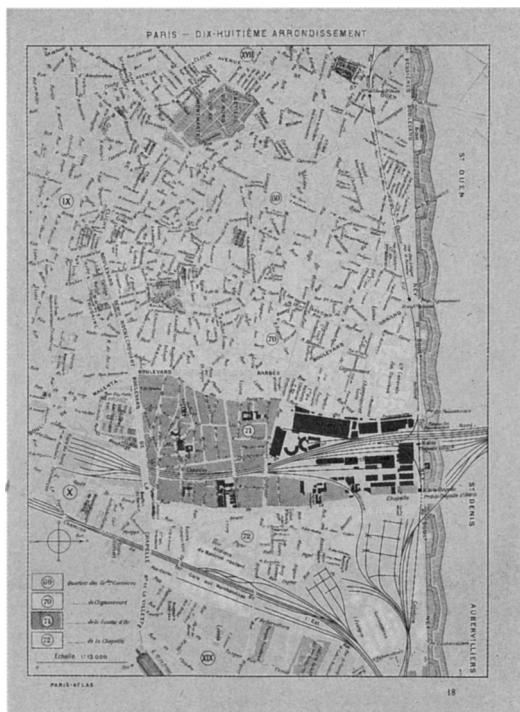
It has been suggested that Van Gogh's watercolours were influenced by gouaches which Camille Pissarro made that same summer,<sup>16</sup> and which he supposedly saw in the Goupil art gallery, where his brother Theo worked. However, there is no evidence that Theo dealt in gouaches by Pissarro before September 1887.<sup>17</sup>

The combination of bright colours, strong recession into depth, lively brushstrokes and delicate draughtsmanship makes the watercolours of the Paris ramparts accomplished and attractive works. Although all are unsigned, Van Gogh very probably hoped to sell them.

15 *Fernand Bourdon, Paris-Atlas, Paris 1900, p. 183.*

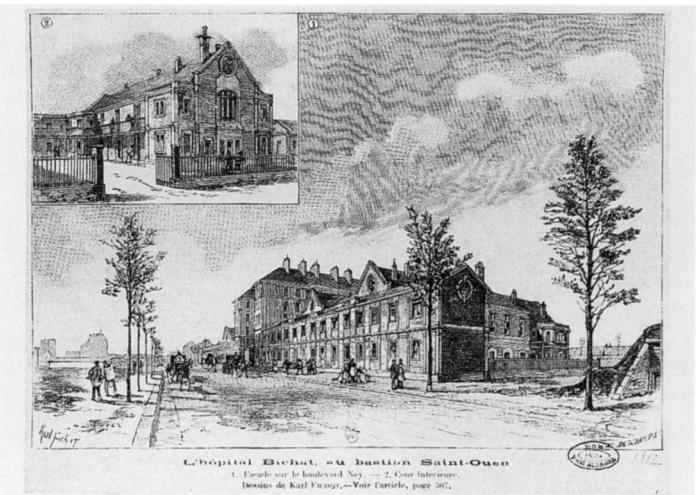
16 *Martigny 2000, p. 293.*

17 *The first documented purchase of a gouache by Pissarro is found in a letter of September 1887 from Theo to the artist. See L.R. Pissarro and L. Venturi, Camille Pissarro. Son art - son œuvre, Paris 1939, no. 1408. With thanks to Chris Stolwijk.*



317c Plan of the 18th arrondissement.

From: F. Bourdon, *Paris-Atlas*, Paris 1900.



317d Karl Fichot, *Hôpital Bichat*, 1882.

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.

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## 318 Gate in the Paris ramparts

JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil, pen in brown ink, transparent and opaque watercolour, on wove paper  
Traces of assisting lines  
24.1 x 31.6 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 420 V/1962  
F 1401 JH 1284

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1931-62 on loan to the  
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;  
1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation;  
1962-73 on loan to the  
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;  
1973 on permanent loan to the  
Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 124;  
vol. 4, pl. cxlv; Cooper 1955, p. 56;  
London 1968, p. 67, no. 85; De la  
Faille 1970, pp. 490, 491, 661;  
Toronto 1981, p. 105, no. 6;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 448,  
no. 2.486; Thomson 1987, pp. 18,  
20, 21, 23; Paris 1988, pp. 134, 135,  
no. 48; Otterlo 1990, pp. 193, 213,  
228; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1,  
pp. 124, 363, 364, vol. 2, pl. cxlv;  
Heenk 1995, pp. 151, 152, 154;  
Hulsker 1996, pp. 284, 286.

EXHIBITIONS  
1896 Paris, no cat. known [not for  
sale?] (possibly cat. 317); 1914-15  
Amsterdam, no. 127; 1923 Utrecht,  
no. 28; 1923 Rotterdam, no cat.  
known; 1926 Munich, no. 2103  
(not for sale); 1927-28 Berlin,  
no. 47; 1928 Vienna & Hannover,

*Gate in the Paris ramparts* is one of four watercolours which Van Gogh made of the fortifications around Paris in the summer of 1887. In contrast to the other three (see cat. 317), this is not a view along the ramparts but directly facing them, at a point where the wall was interrupted by a gate. In addition to the composition, this sheet differs from the others in size, type of paper and drawing materials.

Van Gogh's vantage point was on the corner of the road entering the city and the slightly higher one running along the ramparts.<sup>1</sup> He started by sketching an initial, precise draft in pencil on a fairly thick sheet of wove paper, which seems to have been torn from a sketchpad, judging by the serrated top edge.<sup>2</sup> He used a perspective frame to fix the tricky perspective of the composition, as can be seen from the vertical lines pencilled along the left and right edges and the diagonal line extending into the scene from the lower left corner.<sup>3</sup>

When he had finished the draft, Van Gogh carefully worked it up with brown ink before applying the watercolour, some of which is opaque and some transparent. The meticulousness with which he went over the sketch in ink, the precise brushwork colouring the figures, horse-drawn tram and trees, and above all the various colour notations in pencil, suggest that the ink and watercolour were added later, in the studio.<sup>4</sup> Van Gogh wrote 'violet' on the wall on the left, 'jaune' in the grass above the righthand wall, and 'rose' in the lower left corner. The last of these does not correspond to the colour visible today, which is an indeterminate tint probably caused by discolouration.<sup>5</sup>

There are some 30 figures on the road crossing the empty canal – a very large number by Van Gogh's standards. The precision with which he drew them, with hatchings and coloured clothing, is also exceptional. The lack of shadows makes the figures look as if they are not in contact with the ground. Against the wall on the right is a small tollhouse with a horse-drawn tram in front. At the back of the tram is a queue of people waiting to board. It can be deduced from the yellow colour of the grass on the ramparts that Van Gogh made this watercolour slightly later in the summer than the other three, where the grass is still green.

The powerful composition with the diagonals of the road and the tele-

graph wires, the division into coloured areas which were probably bolder originally, and the presence of numerous small figures all suggest the influence of Japanese prints (fig. 318a). They were a source of inspiration that was also becoming increasingly apparent in the paintings Van Gogh made in the summer of 1887.<sup>6</sup>

It is difficult to say which gate this is. One theory, based on the common motifs of the tollhouse and the horse-drawn tram, is that it is the one depicted in *Road running beside the Paris ramparts* (cat. 317),<sup>7</sup> and because it was wrongly identified as the Porte de Clichy the name of that gate was often attached to this sheet.<sup>8</sup> The trouble is that neither the tollhouse nor the tram, nor the fence at the side of the road, were unique to the Porte de Clichy. The city's tram services crossed the ramparts at 19 places, and there were tollhouses and fences at other gates as well (fig. 318b).<sup>9</sup> Moreover, if this was the same location as in cat. 317, the apartment building would also have been visible in that watercolour. The tall building seen there is another



318<sup>a</sup> Utagawa Hiroshige, *A hundred views of famous places in Edo. View of the Saruwakacho theatre street by night*, 1856-59. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

no. 47; 1929 Amsterdam, no. 44; 1929-30 Rotterdam, no. 31; 1930-31 Arnhem, Groningen, Leeuwarden & Enschede, no cat. known, no. 26, no cat. known, respectively; 1931 Amsterdam, no. 187; 1932 Manchester, no. 64; 1945 Amsterdam, unnumbered; 1946-47 Liège, Brussels & Mons, no. 45; 1947 Paris, no. 46; 1947 Geneva, no. 47; 1947-48 London, Birmingham & Glasgow, no. 135; 1948 Bergen & Oslo, no. 84 and no. 85, respectively; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 239; 1952 Delft, no. 273; 1953 Zürich, no. 65; 1953 The Hague, no. 54; 1953 Otterlo & Amsterdam, no. 93; 1953-54 Saint Louis, Philadelphia & Toledo, no. 90; 1954-55 Bern, no. 130; 1955 Antwerp, no. 237; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 136; 1957 Nijmegen, no. 47; 1957-58 Stockholm, no. 56, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken & Gothenburg, no cat. known; 1958-59 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland & Seattle, no. 116; 1959-60 Utrecht, no. 78; 1960 Enschede, no. 32; 1961-62 Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo & Boston, no. 112; 1962-63 Pittsburgh, Detroit & Kansas City, no. 112; 1963 Amsterdam, no. 99; 1963 Humlebaek, no. 89; 1964 Washington & New York, no. 89; 1965 Charleroi & Ghent, no. 56; 1966 Paris & Albi, no. 36; 1967 Lille & Zürich, no. 38; 1967-68 Dallas, Philadelphia, Toledo & Ottawa, no. 35; 1968 Liège, no. 35; 1968-69 London, no. 85; 1969 Humlebaek, no. 15; 1969-70 Los Angeles, Saint Louis, Philadelphia & Columbus, no. 16; 1970-71 Baltimore, San Francisco & Brooklyn, no. 84; 1971-72 Paris, no. 161; 1972 Bordeaux, no. 54; 1972-73 Strasbourg & Bern, no. 60; 1977 Paris, unnumbered; 1981 Toronto & Amsterdam, no. 6; 1988 Paris, no. 48; 1990 Otterlo, no. 161.



318 Gate in the Paris ramparts

one altogether, for it stands not in front of but beyond the road leading into the city, and faces the fortifications.

These differences show that the two watercolours are very probably not of the same gate. The fall of the shadows in *Gate in the Paris ramparts* points to a gate on the north-west side of the city, assuming that this summer scene was drawn in the afternoon and thus with the sun in the south or south-west. This was also near where Van Gogh lived, and was a district he walked through on his way to the Seine and the small towns along its banks. There were four gates with tram services on that side of the city: the Porte de Neuilly, Porte de Champerret, Porte de Courcelles and Porte de Clichy. Only at the latter entrance was there a site to which the smoking factory chimneys to the right of the apartment building could have belonged, and that was the Chemin de Fer de Rouen. It is very possible, then, that the gate in this watercolour is the Porte de Clichy after all, as had been suggested (but for the wrong reasons).<sup>10</sup>

Although *Gate in the Paris ramparts* is unsigned, Van Gogh very probably thought that he could find buyers for this and the three other watercolours which he made that summer.<sup>11</sup>

1 That the road running along the ramparts was higher than those leading into the city is clear from cat. 317.

2 Cats. 304 and 320 also have serrated edges.

3 The vertical lines corresponded to the sides of the frame, and the diagonal to a wire strung between the lower left and upper right corners of the frame. No horizontal or vertical assisting lines were found, and it is possible that Van Gogh erased them.

4 Heenk 1995, p. 151, believes that only the watercolour was applied in the studio.

5 Cats. 312 and 314 are the only other drawings from the Paris period with colour notations.

6 It was in this period that he painted his three copies after Japanese prints; see Appendix 1.

7 Paris 1988, p. 134.

8 See cat. 317 for the location. The Porte de Clichy was proposed in Thomson 1987, pp. 18, 20, and Paris 1988, p. 134. In Toronto 1981 it was asserted that all four watercolours were made at the same location, near the Porte de Clichy or the Porte de St-Ouen.

9 The tramlines are marked on the 1884 plan of Paris reproduced on the endleaves; inv. BVG 16239, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

10 According to Toronto/Amsterdam 1981, p. 105, the chimneys are those of the factories in Clichy, but they were behind Van Gogh when he made the watercolour, not in front of him.

11 See also cat. 317.



318<sup>b</sup> Photograph of the Porte d'Asnières,  
c. 1906. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

## 319 Entrance to the Moulin de la Galette

JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil, pen in black ink, transparent and opaque watercolour, on wove paper  
Traces of assisting lines  
31.6 x 24.0 cm  
Blind embossed: VIDALON-LES  
ANNONAY ♠ ANC<sup>NE</sup> MANUF<sup>RE</sup> CAN-  
SON & MONTGOLFIER, truncated at  
the top and bottom edges  
Unsigned

Inv. d 148 V/1962  
F 1406 JH 1277

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1931-62 on loan  
to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1962 Vincent van Gogh  
Foundation; 1962-73 on loan to  
the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent loan to  
the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 125,  
vol. 4, pl. cxlvii; London 1968,  
p. 67, no. 84; De la Faille 1970,  
pp. 492, 661, 662; Amsterdam  
1987, p. 448, no. 2.482; Richard  
1988, pp. 19, 20; Otterlo 1990,  
pp. 193, 215, 228; De la Faille  
1992, vol. 1, pp. 125, 364, 365,  
vol. 2, pl. cxlvii; Heenk 1995,  
pp. 153, 154; Hulsker 1996,  
pp. 282, 284, 285.

### EXHIBITIONS

1905 Amsterdam 1, no. 364  
[Dfl. 225]; 1927-28 Berlin, no. 50;  
1928 Vienna & Hannover, no. 50;  
1929 Amsterdam, no. 45; 1929-30

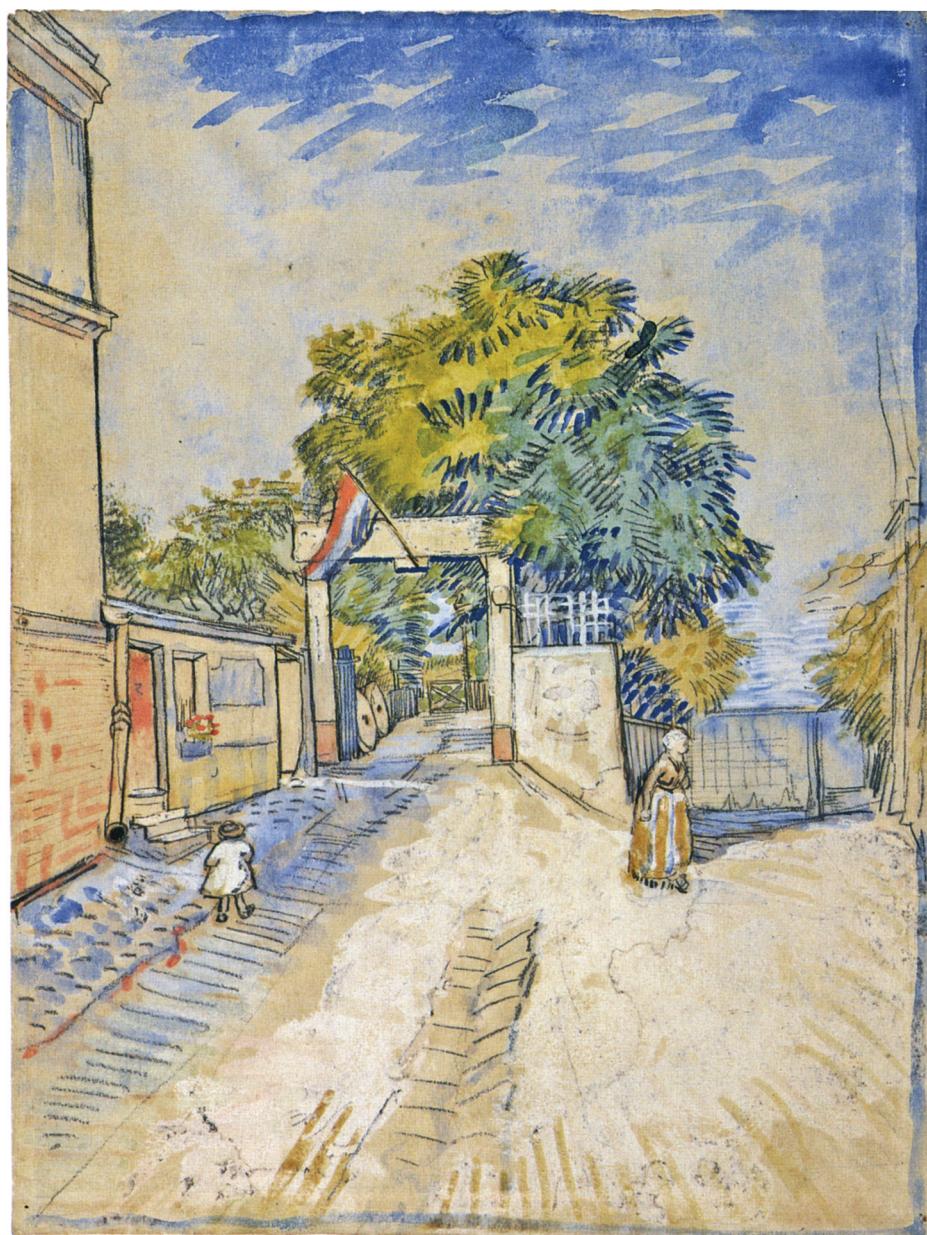
Van Gogh made seven watercolours in the summer of 1887. In addition to the four views of the Paris ramparts discussed earlier, there are three sheets which were executed on Montmartre.<sup>1</sup> Two of the latter, this *Entrance to the Moulin de la Galette* and *Shed with sunflowers* (cat. 320), are particularly intimate in their subject matter and the truncation of the composition. In the third sheet, *View from Montmartre* (fig. 319a), Van Gogh presented a panoramic view of Paris seen from the north-west side of the hill.

This sunny scene shows a road that splits into two, with one part heading off down the hill on the right, where it is blocked by a fence, and the other part leading to a gateway decorated with a flag. Oddly enough, Van Gogh made it a Dutch flag instead of the French one, but that was probably a simple mistake. Beyond the gateway are trees and bushes, and two millstones. A child is walking towards the gateway along the road, which has a gutter running down the middle. The woman at the fork in the road appears to have just come through the gateway.

The flag was long regarded as a sign that the watercolour was made on the French national holiday of *le 14 Juillet*, Bastille Day.<sup>2</sup> However, scenes of Le Blute-fin windmill, and not all of them summery ones, show that the flag was hung out on other days as well, and may simply have served to identify recreational amenities in the 19th century.<sup>3</sup>

For a long time the precise location of the scene was unclear, but Pierre Richard removed all doubt in 1988 when he published an old photograph of exactly the same spot (fig. 319b).<sup>4</sup> It shows not just the gateway but also the low house on the left and the millstones beyond the entrance, and because of the slightly different vantage point, the back of the Blute-fin mill. The latter does not appear in Van Gogh's watercolour, probably because it was hidden by the tall building in the left foreground. The windmill in the photograph enabled the location to be identified as the lane leading to the Moulin de la Galette with its windmills, *guinguette*, dance-hall and belvedere.<sup>5</sup> The lane, called the *chemin des Deux-Frères*, disappeared when work started on the avenue Junot in 1912.<sup>6</sup>

Van Gogh first sketched the scene with broad pencil lines and then worked up some details, such as the wall on the left, the drainpipe and the millstones, with pen and ink, before applying the watercolour. The fore-



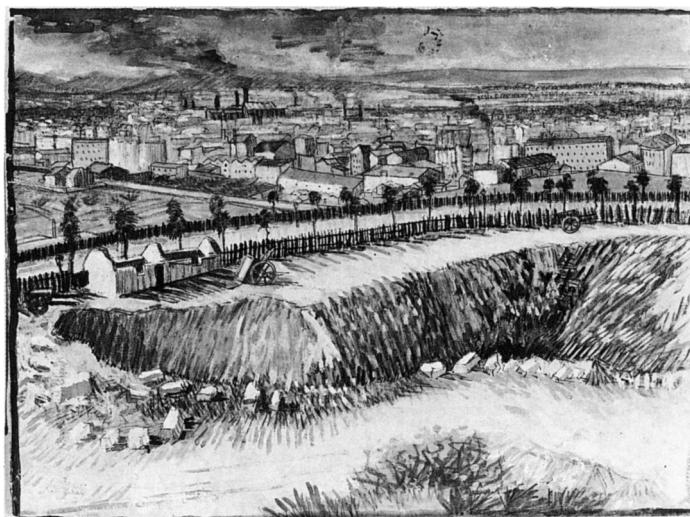
319 Entrance to the Moulin de la Galette

Rotterdam, no. 32; 1930 Laren, no. 44; 1930-31 Arnhem, Groningen, Leeuwarden & Enschede, no cat. known, no. 27, no cat. known, respectively; 1931 Amsterdam, no. 186; 1945 Amsterdam, unnumbered; 1946-47 Liège, Brussels & Mons, no. 46; 1947 Paris, no. 47; 1947 Geneva, no. 48; 1947-48 London, Birmingham & Glasgow, no. 136; 1948 Bergen & Oslo, no. 85 and no. 86, respectively; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 240; 1949 Hengelo, no cat. known; 1949 Gouda, no cat. known; 1952 Delft, no. 274; 1953 Zürich, no. 66; 1953 The Hague, no. 55; 1953 Otterlo & Amsterdam, no. 97; 1953-54 Saint Louis, Philadelphia & Toledo, no. 92; 1954-55 Bern, no. 131; 1955 Antwerp, no. 238; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 137; 1955-56 Liverpool, Manchester & Newcastle-upon-Tyne, no. 105; 1957 Nijmegen, no. 48; 1957-58 Stockholm, no. 58, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken & Gothenburg, no cat. known; 1958-59 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland & Seattle, no. 118; 1959-60 Utrecht, no. 79; 1960 Enschede, no. 33; 1960-61 Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg & Toronto, no. 122; 1961-62 Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo & Boston, no. 113; 1962-63 Pittsburgh, Detroit & Kansas City, no. 113; 1963 Humlebaek, no. 90; 1964 Washington & New York, no. 90; 1965 Charleroi & Ghent, no. 57; 1966 Paris & Albi, no. 37; 1967 Lille & Zürich, no. 39; 1967-68 Dallas, Philadelphia, Toledo & Ottawa, no. 36; 1968 Liège, no. 36; 1968-69 London, no. 84; 1969 Humlebaek, no. 16; 1969-70 Los Angeles, Saint Louis, Philadelphia & Columbus, no. 17; 1970-71 Baltimore, San Francisco & Brooklyn, no. 85; 1971-72 Paris, no. 162; 1972 Bordeaux, no. 55; 1972-73 Strasbourg & Bern, no. 61; 1975 Malmö, no. 61; 1976

ground was originally pink but now looks splotchy due to the irregular fading of the pink pigment and the oxidation of the lead white mixed with the watercolour, which has left black blotches. The blue of the sky was painted with supple, zigzag strokes. The shaded blue on the left was intended to counterbalance the heavier passages in the right half of the scene. Van Gogh added blue framing lines along the right and bottom edges. It is not clear why he did not place them on the other sides as well, as he did in his *View from Montmartre* (fig. 319a).

Van Gogh used a perspective frame to help him get the composition right, as he did in *Gate in the Paris ramparts* (cat. 318) and *Shed with sunflowers* (cat. 320). Some of the assisting lines are still visible. There is a horizontal and a vertical in the middle, two verticals down the left and right sides, a horizontal at the bottom, and two diagonals rising from the lower corners to meet in the middle of the sheet.

Despite the use of this aid, Van Gogh botched the wall to the right of the entrance. The horizontal top suggests that it was on the same plane as the gateway as seen in the photograph, but the bottom of it is at an angle to the entrance. Van Gogh probably had difficulty with this part of the composition, where the road splits in two, with one part ascending and the other descending. The woman's position at the fork in the road is therefore probably no coincidence.



319a *View from Montmartre* (F 1410  
JH 1286), 1887. Amsterdam, Stedelijk  
Museum.

To the left of the gateway in the photograph is a hoarding which does not appear in the watercolour, or at least not in that shape and size. It seems likely that it and the gateway itself, which has a slightly different appearance, were altered in the 20 years separating the watercolour from the photograph.

The solid wove paper has the same dimensions and thickness as *Shed with sunflowers* (cat. 320) and *Gate in the Paris ramparts* (cat. 318), and all three probably came from the same sketchpad.<sup>7</sup> Like the sheet with the shed, there are several small pinholes along the edges of the paper. It is no longer possible to say whether Van Gogh pinned the watercolour up before or after making it. There is no known oil painting for which it could have served as a model. In fact, like the *Shed with sunflowers*, it has every appearance of being a finished work in its own right.

Stockholm & Oslo, no. 61; 1976-77 Tokyo, Kyoto & Nagoya, no. 46; 1990 Otterlo, no. 163.

<sup>1</sup> See cats. 317 and 318 for the views of the ramparts and their dating.

<sup>2</sup> The earliest mentions of that date in the title are in *De la Faille* 1928 and *Meier-Graefe* 1928, and it continued to be used until the 1950s.

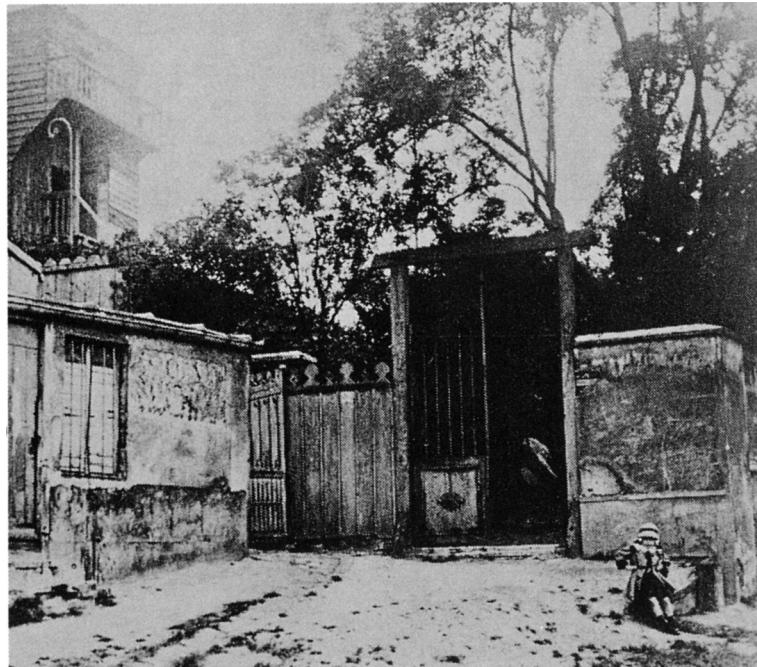
<sup>3</sup> See also cat. 313.

<sup>4</sup> Richard 1988, pp. 19, 20.

<sup>5</sup> There was a second entrance to the *Moulin de la Galette* in the rue Lepic. See cat. 292 for more information about this entertainment complex.

<sup>6</sup> Hillairet 1963, pp. 588, 589.

<sup>7</sup> See cat. 320 for details about the similarities and differences in the paper.



319b Photograph of the entrance to the *Moulin de la Galette*, c. 1908. From: Richard 1988, p. 20.

## 320 Shed with sunflowers

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil, pen in brown ink, transparent and opaque watercolour, on wove paper

Traces of assisting lines

31.6 x 24.1 cm

Blind embossed: VIDALON-LES

ANNONAY ♠ ANC<sup>NE</sup> MANUF<sup>NE</sup> CANSON & MONTGOLFIER, truncated at the top and bottom edges

Unsigned

Inv. d 352 V/1962

F 1411 JH 1305

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925

J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62

V.W. van Gogh; 1931-62 on loan to

the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;

1962 Vincent van Gogh Foundation;

1962-73 on loan to the Stedelijk

Museum, Amsterdam; 1973 on per-

manent loan to the Van Gogh

Museum, Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

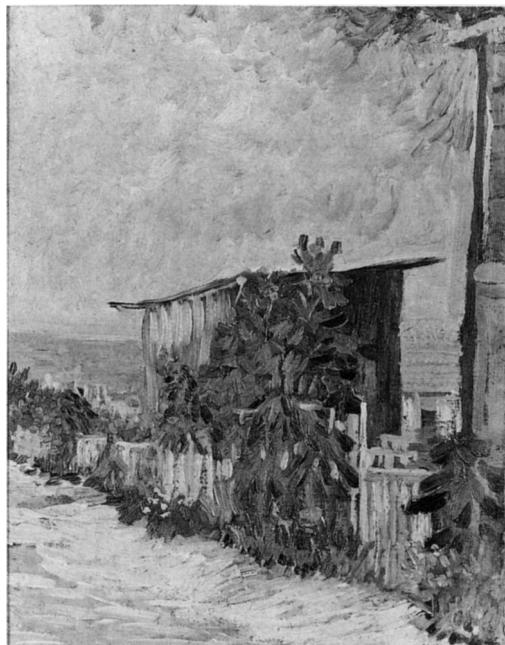
De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 125,  
vol. 4, pl. CXLVII; London 1968, p. 67,  
no. 84; De la Faille 1970, pp. 492,  
661, 662; Amsterdam 1987, p. 448,  
no. 2.482; Richard 1988, pp. 19, 20;  
Otterlo 1990, pp. 193, 215, 228; De la  
Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 125, 364, 365,  
vol. 2, pl. CXLVII; Heenk 1995,  
pp. 153, 154; Hulsker 1996, pp. 282,  
284, 285.

### EXHIBITIONS

1905 Amsterdam 1, no. 364  
[Dfl. 225]; 1927-28 Berlin, no. 50;  
1928 Vienna & Hannover, no. 50;  
1929 Amsterdam, no. 45; 1929-30  
Rotterdam, no. 32; 1930 Laren,  
no. 44; 1930-31 Arnhem, Groningen,  
Leeuwarden & Enschede, no cat.  
known, no. 27, no cat. known,

*Shed with sunflowers* was made among the vegetable gardens that lay scattered on the north-west slope of Montmartre (fig. 236a). Running past the shed is a path on which a child is walking. Along the right side of the sheet is a taller building with a window. In the left background Van Gogh painstakingly depicted a view of one of the suburbs of Paris and its factories, either Clichy or St-Ouen.

As with the other watercolours, the initial draft is in pencil, with Van Gogh again using his perspective frame to draw several assisting lines: a horizontal along the lower edge, a vertical down the left side and another one in the centre foreground. In the very centre of the composition there is also a diagonal pencil line. It is very possible that the corner of the taller shed on the right conceals a third vertical line, for it is at the same distance from the edge of the paper as the vertical running down the left side.



320<sup>a</sup> *Shed with sunflowers* (F264a JH 1306),

1887. San Francisco, The Fine Arts

Museums of San Francisco.



320 Shed with sunflowers

respectively; 1931 Amsterdam, no. 186; 1945 Amsterdam, unnumbered; 1946-47 Liège, Brussels & Mons, no. 46; 1947 Paris, no. 47; 1947 Geneva, no. 48; 1947-48 London, Birmingham & Glasgow, no. 136; 1948 Bergen & Oslo, no. 85 and no. 86, respectively; 1948-49 The Hague, no. 240; 1949 Hengelo, no cat. known; 1949 Gouda, no cat. known; 1952 Delft, no. 274; 1953 Zürich, no. 66; 1953 The Hague, no. 55; 1953 Otterlo & Amsterdam, no. 97; 1953-54 Saint Louis, Philadelphia & Toledo, no. 92; 1954-55 Bern, no. 131; 1955 Antwerp, no. 238; 1955 Amsterdam, no. 137; 1955-56 Liverpool, Manchester & Newcastle-upon-Tyne, no. 105; 1957 Nijmegen, no. 48; 1957-58 Stockholm, no. 58, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken & Gothenburg, no cat. known; 1958-59 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland & Seattle, no. 118; 1959-60 Utrecht, no. 79; 1960 Enschede, no. 33; 1960-61 Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg & Toronto, no. 122; 1961-62 Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo & Boston, no. 113; 1962-63 Pittsburgh, Detroit & Kansas City, no. 113; 1963 Humlebaek, no. 90; 1964 Washington & New York, no. 90; 1965 Charleroi & Ghent, no. 57; 1966 Paris & Albi, no. 37; 1967 Lille & Zürich, no. 39; 1967-68 Dallas, Philadelphia, Toledo & Ottawa, no. 36; 1968 Liège, no. 36; 1968-69 London, no. 84; 1969 Humlebaek, no. 16; 1969-70 Los Angeles, Saint Louis, Philadelphia & Columbus, no. 17; 1970-71 Baltimore, San Francisco & Brooklyn, no. 85; 1971-72 Paris, no. 162; 1972 Bordeaux, no. 55; 1972-73 Strasbourg & Bern, no. 61; 1975 Malmö, no. 61; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo, no. 61; 1976-77 Tokyo, Kyoto & Nagoya, no. 46; 1990 Otterlo, no. 163.

Further support for this is provided by the vertical in the centre foreground, which is precisely midway between the one on the left and the corner of the tall building.

The pencil design was then worked up with pen and ink before Van Gogh applied the watercolour. Oxidation of lead white in the sky has left black blotches.<sup>1</sup> Some of the ink ran when the paper was wetted with the watercolour, most noticeably in the tall shed.

The solid paper has the same dimensions and thickness as the *Gate in the Paris ramparts* (cat. 318) and *Entrance to the Moulin de la Galette* (cat. 319). All three sheets probably came from a sketchpad, although it is impossible to be certain because there are differences between the edges and not all of them have blind embossing.<sup>2</sup> The right edge of *Shed with sunflowers* is serrated, and along the left edge is part of the blind embossing VIDALON-LES ANNONAY ANC<sup>NE</sup> MANUF<sup>RE</sup> CANSON & MONTGOLFIER. Van Gogh used large, loose sheets of the same paper for cats. 301-303.

*Shed with sunflowers* has several very small holes in the corners which were probably made when Van Gogh pinned it up.<sup>3</sup> It is no longer possible to say where or when this was done, either on a drawing board before he started work or on a wall at home after he had finished. There is a painting of the same subject (fig. 320a), but the differences in composition make it unlikely that the watercolour served as a preliminary study. Van Gogh was closer to the shed when he made the painting, and faced it more squarely. Moreover, the watercolour has the appearance of a work complete in itself.

It was in the late summer of 1887 that Van Gogh began incorporating sunflowers into his work. They would later become subjects in their own right, but in the Paris paintings and drawings of the late summer of 1887 they are no more than accessories.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This phenomenon is described in cat. 317.

<sup>2</sup> Cat. 319 lacks the serrated edge, and cat. 318 has no blind embossing.

<sup>3</sup> They are smaller than the holes made by drawing pins, and are also found in cat. 319.

<sup>4</sup> The three paintings and two drawings were all made on Montmartre. They are the watercolour discussed here, the related painting (fig. 320a), cat. 321, F 388v JH 1307 and F 810 JH 2109.

## 321 Couple out for a stroll

Like cats. 287, 300 and 322, this summer scene was drawn on the back of a combined menu and bill from the Du Chalet restaurant.<sup>1</sup> The rapid execution places it in 1887, and judging by the tall sunflowers, some of which are running to seed, it must have been made in the late summer, in August or September.

The general location is supposedly a spot on the ramparts (see cats. 315-318) looking out over the western suburbs of Paris.<sup>2</sup> The main objection to the proposed location is that the couple appear to be strolling somewhere high above the city, as the buildings on the left are clearly way below them. Since the ramparts were not high enough to provide such a view, it is more likely that this is an as yet undeveloped area on the hill of Montmartre which, as shown by the setting sun, gave a view over the western part of the city. The sketchiness of the scene makes it impossible to be any more precise about the topography. Anyway, Van Gogh was more interested in the mood. The buildings of the large, teeming city probably served to accentuate the rustic nature of the main subject, so topographical accuracy was of little importance. It is doubtful whether the drawing has a more symbolic connotation. The sun and the sunflowers only took on that kind of significance in Van Gogh's work in Arles. Here they serve mainly to convey the sense of a fine summer evening far removed from the bustle of the city.<sup>3</sup>

The drawing is in pencil, and was folded once horizontally, leaving a clear, grubby crease.

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1887

Pencil on wove paper

13.6 x 21.0 cm

Unsigned

Verso: menu of the Grand Bouillon-Restaurant Du Chalet

Inv. d 143 V/1962

SD 1720 JH 1308

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 584,  
672; Amsterdam 1987, p. 449,  
no. 2.489; Thomson 1987, pp. 18,  
24; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1,  
p. 459, vol. 2, pl. CCLIV; Heenk  
1995, p. 155; Hulsker 1996,  
pp. 288, 291.

### EXHIBITIONS

None.

<sup>1</sup> See cat. 287 for further information about this restaurant. The bill on the other side of the drawing was for 1 franc 50 centimes.

<sup>2</sup> Thomson 1987, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Thomson sees a similar sort of symbolism in the scene, and suggests that it depicts 'the working class at ease'.



321 Couple out for a stroll

## 322 Portrait of Père Tanguy

Julien-François Tanguy (1825-1894), better known as Père Tanguy, was a dealer in art and artists' materials. He had a shop at 14, rue Clauzel in the 9th arrondissement, not far from Montmartre and only a few hundred metres from the rue Laval (now the rue Victor-Massé), where Vincent and Theo lived for a few months before moving to the rue Lepic. Tanguy was one of the first dealers in Impressionists like Cézanne, Pissarro and Guillaumin, and also took an interest in the younger generation by offering works by Van Gogh, Bernard and Gauguin for sale in his shop.<sup>1</sup>

Van Gogh portrayed Tanguy in three paintings and this spontaneous pencil drawing. It shows his affection for the art dealer, which is confirmed in several of his letters (some of which also contain remarkably frank expressions of his passionate dislike of Tanguy's wife). When describing the postman Joseph Roulin in his letters from Arles, he noted approvingly that Roulin, like Tanguy, was an outspoken republican.<sup>2</sup> Tanguy's tranquil, harmonious nature reminded Van Gogh of the peace of mind he had encountered among the peasants at Nuenen, and of the idea he had formed of the character of the painter Jean-François Millet.<sup>3</sup> In September 1888 he wrote to say that he expected to become more and more like a Japanese painter, at one with nature, and that when he grew old he would be like Tanguy.<sup>4</sup>

The rather conservative manner and dark palette of the earliest painting of Tanguy indicate that it was painted in late 1886 or early 1887 (fig. 322a). Tanguy's activities as an art dealer were quite modest; his main source of income came from the sale of artists' materials. He made up tubes of his own paints, and the apron he is wearing in the earliest portrait alludes to that side of his business.

The other three works are all closely related. They show Tanguy in a simple jacket with a straw hat on his head. In the paintings he is depicted three-quarter length and seated (fig. 322b, c), while the drawing is a bust. The background of the latter is dominated by elements from two Japanese prints, while that in the paintings is filled with several prints. The smaller canvas in a private collection also contains part of one of Van Gogh's own still lifes.<sup>5</sup> The interrelationship of the paintings is perfectly clear. As was so often the case, Van Gogh first made a fairly spontaneous painted study

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1887

Pencil on wove paper

21.4 x 13.7 cm

Unsigned

Verso: menu of the Grand Bouillon-Restaurant Du Chalet

Inv. d 147 V/1962

F 1412 JH 1350

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 127,  
vol. 4, pl. CL; De la Faille 1970,  
pp. 494, 662; Amsterdam 1987,  
p. 450, no. 2.494; Paris 1988,  
pp. 166, 167, no. 64; De la Faille  
1992, vol. 1, pp. 127, 366, vol. 2,  
pl. CL; Heenk 1995, pp. 155, 156;  
Hulsker 1996, p. 304.

### EXHIBITIONS

1914-15 Amsterdam, no. 138;  
1948 Amersfoort, no cat. known;  
1948 Hilversum, no cat. known;  
1948-49 The Hague, no. 245;  
1949 Hengelo, no cat. known;  
1949 Gouda, no cat. known;  
1954-55 Bern, no. 134; 1955  
Antwerp, no. 240; 1955  
Amsterdam, no. 139; 1957  
Nijmegen, no. 49; 1957-58  
Stockholm, no. 59, Luleå, Kiruna,  
Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken &  
Gothenburg, no cat. known; 1962  
London, no. 48; 1971-72 Paris,

no. 166; 1972 Bordeaux, no. 56;  
1975 Malmö, no. 64; 1976  
Stockholm & Oslo, no. 64; 1988  
Paris, no. 64; 1992 Kyoto &  
Tokyo, no. 14.

<sup>1</sup> On *Père Tanguy* see, for example,  
Welsh-Ovcharov 1976, pp. 213, 214; Paris  
1988, pp. 340, 341; Distel 1990, pp. 41-43.

<sup>2</sup> See letters 656/516, 659/B14 and  
663/520.

<sup>3</sup> Letter 663/520.

<sup>4</sup> Letter 689/540: 'Here my life will  
become more and more like a Japanese  
painter's, living close to nature like a petit  
bourgeois. And that, as you well know, is  
a less lugubrious affair than the decadent's  
way. If I can live long enough, I shall  
become something like *Père Tanguy*'.

<sup>5</sup> F 383 JH 1339.

(fig. 322b), followed by the same subject treated in a much more detailed and stylistically refined painting, which in this particular case was also larger (fig. 322c).

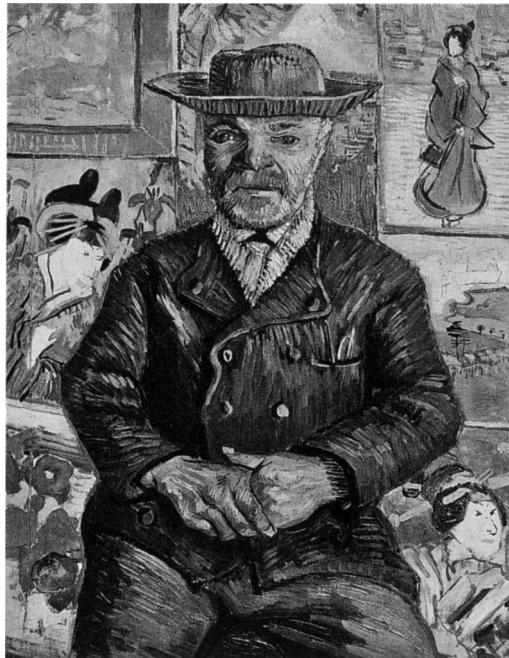
The relationship of the drawing to those canvases is less evident. Like cats. 287, 300 and 321, it is on the back of a menu and bill from the Du Chalet restaurant, so it is not large. The inferior quality of the paper and the paucity of detail make it unlikely that it was a preliminary study that was actually consulted while painting the portraits. It should more probably be regarded as a sort of visual memorandum, as an idea recorded on the first piece of paper that came to hand which was then elaborated in the two paintings. Another possibility is that Van Gogh was experimenting with a slightly different idea. In contrast to the paintings, the backgrounds of which are formed by prints which may be too large but are clearly recognisable as such, there are no such references in the scene forming the background of the drawing. Without knowing the paintings, the idea that it might be a print might not have arisen. It extends over the full width, and it is very possible that Van Gogh wanted to create the illusion of a true Japanese landscape instead of supplying a merely decorative backdrop. That may explain a detail which sets the drawing apart from the canvases, for *Tanguy* has been



322a *Portrait of Père Tanguy* (F 263

JH 1202), 1886-87. Copenhagen, Ny

Carlsberg Glyptotek.



322b *Portrait of Père Tanguy* (F 364

JH 1352), 1887. Private collection.

given a slightly Japanese look with his almost-closed eyes, which are normal and open in the paintings. This transforms the art dealer into a Japanese in a piece of artistic manipulation comparable to the way in which Van Gogh was to depict himself in Arles in his *Self-portrait as a bonze*.<sup>6</sup> It was a metamorphosis that perfectly suited the setting.

The background is a combination of elements from two prints by Hiroshige. Previous authors have pointed out that here Van Gogh was using Hiroshige's *Fuji seen from the Sagami river* (fig. 322d),<sup>7</sup> although he added elements not found in the original. The most obvious is the flock of birds flying in front of the mountain, which may have been taken from another woodcut by Hiroshige, *The peat bog of the floating island in the Fuji marshes* (fig. 322e). Although that print was not in the collection belonging to Vincent and Theo, which is now in the Van Gogh Museum,<sup>8</sup> the parallels are obvious enough to suggest that at one time it was, or in any event that Van Gogh knew it well. This is clear not only from the combination of Mount Fuji and the birds, but also from the short, grassy stalks in the water on either side of Tanguy's head, which appear in *The peat bog* and not in the other print.

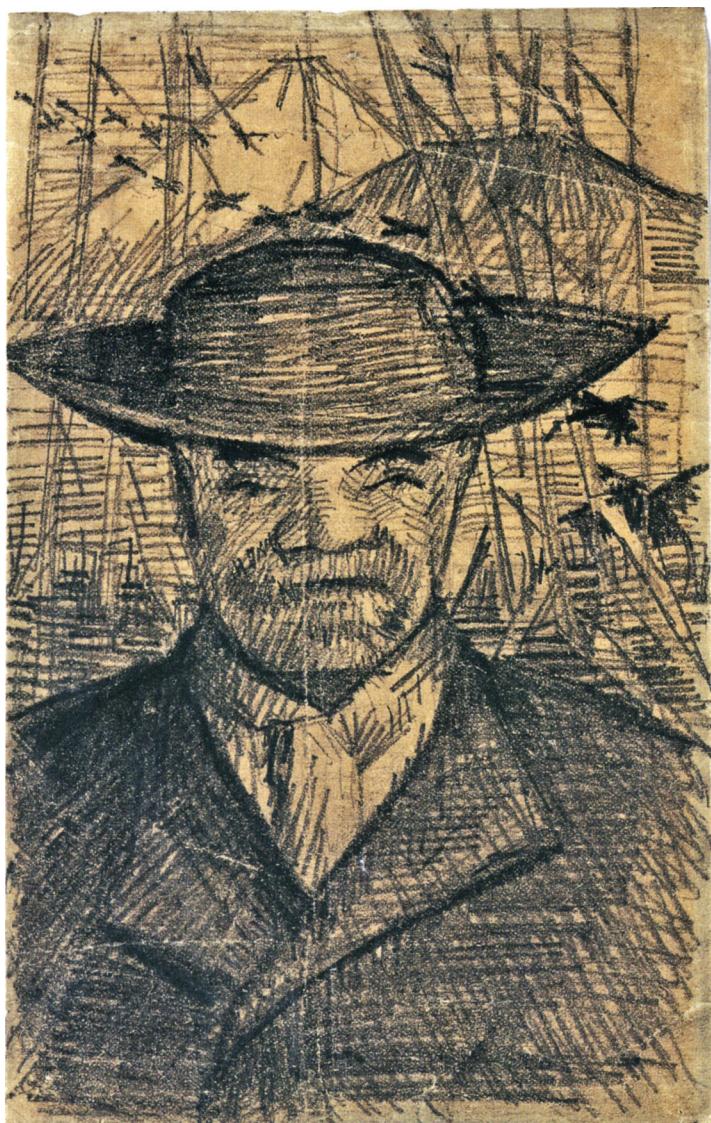
<sup>6</sup> F 476 JH 1581. A bonze is a Japanese Buddhist priest.

<sup>7</sup> Arles 1999, p. 19. That catalogue identifies all the prints in the background of the paintings.

<sup>8</sup> There is an impression of it in the Van Gogh Museum's collection, inv. n 520 V/1986, but that came as a gift in 1986.



322c *Portrait of Père Tanguy* (F 363 JH 1351), 1887. Paris, Musée Rodin.



322 Portrait of Père Tanguy

A number of authors have studied the content of the paintings, and their interpretations also apply to the drawing with its more limited but very similar iconography, regardless of whether one regards it as a first draft of an idea or as a slightly different variant of the scene in the canvases.

John House drew attention to the associations which Tanguy, Japan and peace of mind evoked in Van Gogh.<sup>9</sup> He also compared Tanguy's pose to that of Japanese Buddhas which Van Gogh could have seen in the Musée Guimet in Paris, a pose designed to state that Tanguy had achieved an inner state which he himself was seeking. Tsukasa Kōdera explored the influence of the traditional Buddha type more deeply, but saw the meaning of the entire scene in a slightly different light. Emile Bernard had stressed in his recollections of Tanguy that the colour merchant and Van Gogh shared a deep, human socialism, and according to Kōdera the paintings are expressions of an associated Utopian ideal.<sup>10</sup> Carol Zemel went even further when she stated that in the iconography of the portraits 'Montmartre becomes Japan, Mont-martre (the holy hill of martyrs) becomes Mount Fuji, and the socialist color merchant becomes a smiling sage at the center of a harmonized utopia of gender, nature and color decor'.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See note 3. Like many authors after him, House in London 1979-80, no. 98, draws attention to a passage in letter 642/506, in which Van Gogh says that Tanguy would be right to kill his impossible wife. The fact that he has not done so leads to comparisons with Socrates, Christian martyrs and slaves from classical antiquity. The entire passage drips with sarcasm, though, and should be taken lightly.

<sup>10</sup> Kōdera 1990, pp. 53, 54. Kōdera formulated his interpretation slightly differently in the long introduction to Amsterdam 1991, pp. 19-24. See also Bernard 1908, p. 606. For other interpretations of the paintings see Amsterdam 1990, no. 32; Orton 1971, pp. 7-10; Amsterdam 1978, pp. 16, 17; Paris 1988, nos. 64, 65; Roskill 1970, p. 81; Toronto 1981, no. 8.

<sup>11</sup> Zemel 1997, pp. 201-05, with the passage cited on p. 204.



322d Utagawa Hiroshige, *Fuji seen from the Sagami river*, 1858. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



322e Utagawa Hiroshige, *The peat bog of the floating island in the Fuji marshes*, 1855. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

<sup>12</sup> See the Introduction and cat. 287.

<sup>13</sup> Paris 1988, no. 64.

<sup>14</sup> In this case, too, there is a bill on the back of the drawing, this time for 1 franc 25 centimes. Cf. cats. 287, 300 and 321.

What is clear is that with his portrait of the socially engaged, innerly tranquil Tanguy against a background of a Utopia symbolised by Japanese prints (or by an illusory landscape) Van Gogh was proclaiming his belief in higher values which guide mankind and offer hope of a better world so different from that of his own day.

The drawing would be difficult to date without the paintings. The canvas in the Musée Rodin, in particular, is in a style which is so developed that it must have been made in late 1887. The same applies to this small drawing. In November/December of that year Van Gogh organised an exhibition of his own works and that of other young artists in the Du Chalet restaurant.<sup>12</sup> It has been suggested that the drawing, which after all is on the back of one of the restaurant menus, was made at that exhibition.<sup>13</sup> However, it is difficult to explain why Van Gogh would have made a sketch of his own work which deviates from it at key points.

The scene is not highly finished, but neither is it a superficial sketch. There are enough details for us to read the 'composite' print in the background, but otherwise Van Gogh restricted himself to the main features in this well-observed, spontaneously sketched portrait in pencil. The sheet was pinned up somewhere, for there are holes at top centre and the bottom corners. There are also several creases.<sup>14</sup>

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## Appendices

# Appendix I

## *Tracings for paintings*

Van Gogh's experiments with ideas he had picked up from Japanese art resulted, among other things, in three painted copies (figs. 1.1a-c). Two are based on woodcuts by Hiroshige (1797-1858) (figs. 1.1d and e), while for the third and largest he used an illustration in the magazine *Paris illustré*, to which he added motifs taken from a number of different Japanese prints (fig. 1.1f). The avant-garde brushwork and use of colour warrants a dating in the second half of 1887. The scenes were transferred to canvas with the aid of tracings, which must therefore date from the same period (nos. 1.1 and 1.2).

Only these two have survived, but Van Gogh undoubtedly employed a similar aid when copying Hiroshige's *Sudden shower on the Great Bridge at Atake* (fig. 1.1d). The tracings have not the slightest claim to be works of art, and cannot even be regarded as studies or preliminary studies, which is why they have been placed in this appendix rather than among the corpus of the drawings proper.



1.1a *The Great Bridge at Atake in the rain*  
(after Hiroshige) (F 372 JH 1297), 1887.  
Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



1.1b *The Plum tree teahouse at Kameido*  
(after Hiroshige) (F 371 JH 1296), 1887.  
Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

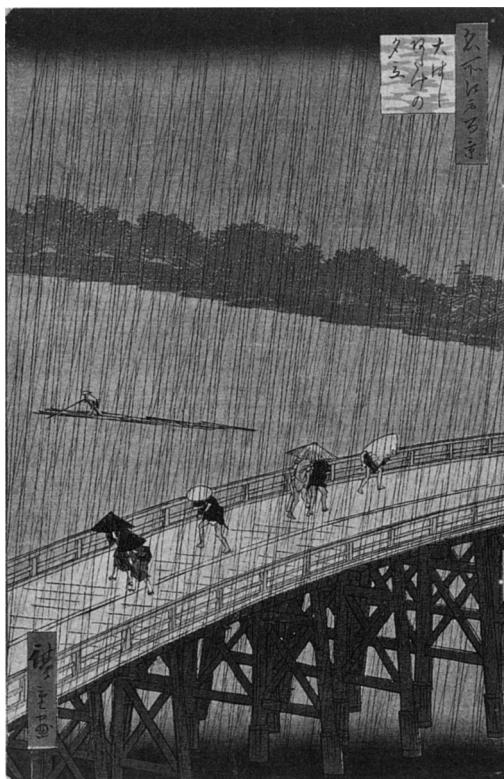
Both are on tracing paper, which must have been reasonably transparent when Van Gogh used it, although the lack of detail does suggest that it may have been more opaque than he might have wished. The yellowing increased with age, and during essential restoration work in 1992 the transparency was eliminated altogether when the brittle sheets were backed with Japanese paper.

Van Gogh first drew a pencilled grid before tracing *The Plum tree teahouse at Kameido* (no. 1.1), which extends beyond the original scene at various places, particularly at the bottom. The lines of the grid are approximately 1.3 cm apart, which corresponds to half an inch.<sup>1</sup> They were then numbered in ink, and in pencil as well at the bottom. The outlines of the foreground tree, above all its trunk and most prominent branches, are drawn with heavy lines in pen and ink. Those of the trees in the middleground are a little lighter, while the tiny figures and the teahouse in the background were sketched with thin, rudimentary lines. In the sky there is a narrow, hatched, horizontal band indicating a colour transition from red to pink in the evening sky, while a similar band on the horizon marks the area where the light

<sup>1</sup> Although France (like the Netherlands) had adopted the metric system at the beginning of the 19th century, old units of measure like the inch (which varied in length from region to region but was roughly equivalent to the modern inch of 2.54 cm) continued in use among craftsmen until well into the 20th century.



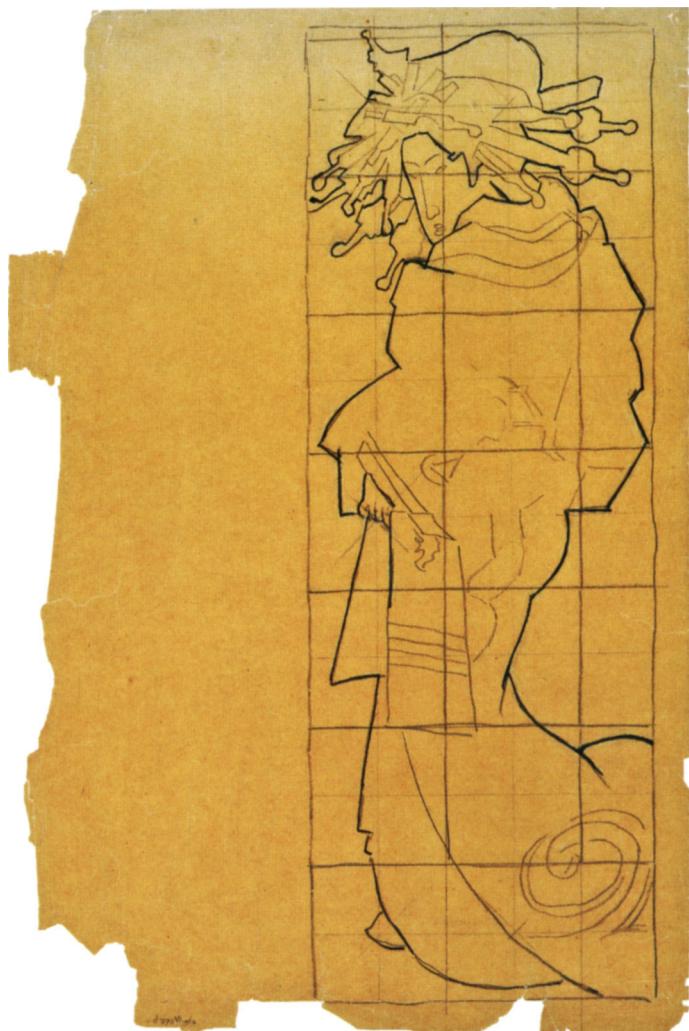
1.1c Oiran (after an illustration after Keisai Eisen) (F 373 JH 1298), 1887. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



1.1d Utagawa Hiroshige, *Sudden shower on the Great Bridge at Atake*, 1857. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



1.1 Tracing of Hiroshige *The Plum tree*  
teahouse at Kameido



1.2 Tracing of the cover of *Paris illustré*.  
*Le Japon*

tones of the sky and blossoms modulate to the green of the grass. After copying the scene in paint Van Gogh added decorative texts which he took from other prints.<sup>2</sup>

The top right corner of the sheet is missing, removing more than  $5 \times 10$  cm from the scene. Pieces of the margins have broken off along the top edge and at bottom right. Most of the fractures coincide with pencil lines, so the paper was already brittle when Van Gogh was working on it, with the damage being caused by the hard point of his pencil. It actually penetrated the paper along the lower horizontal of the missing top right corner, leaving a line on the underlying print.

Van Gogh took the scene of a Japanese courtesan from an illustration after a woodcut by Keisai Eisen (1791-1848), *Oiran* (fig. 1.1f), which adorned the cover of the May 1886 edition of *Paris illustré. Le Japon* and was reversed left for right relative to the original. He probably drew the frame around the scene first, for the grid remains neatly within it (no. 1.2). The grid itself consists of squares measuring approximately  $2.6 \times 2.6$  cm (1 x 1 in.), which are subdivided into quarters by thinner horizontal and vertical lines. All the lines are in pencil, and

<sup>2</sup> See Van Bremen-Ito/Van Rappard-Boon 1992, pp. 15-18. The paintings executed with the aid of these tracings will be discussed in the second volume of the catalogue of Van Gogh's paintings in the museum.

<sup>3</sup> See New York 1984, no. 5.



1.1e Utagawa Hiroshige, *The Plum tree teahouse at Kameido*, 1857. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.



1.1f Cover of *Paris illustré. Le Japon*, May 1886. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

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there is no numbering. Van Gogh added diagonal lines at various important points of intersection, by the woman's hand for example. He traced the scene in pencil and then reinforced the outlines of the clothing, hand, coiffure and face with black ink. Within the outlines of the kimono he merely indicated passages of contrasting colours.

The edges of this sheet are also damaged, mainly at the left and the bottom. The only paper loss in the scene itself, which takes up only a little more than the right half of the sheet, is along the bottom.

Van Gogh used Keisai Eisen's courtesan for the central part of his painting, surrounding her on all sides with decorative borders which he borrowed from other Japanese prints.<sup>3</sup>

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1.1 Tracing of Hiroshige,  
*The Plum tree teahouse*  
*at Kameido*

JULY-DECEMBER 1887  
Pencil, pen and ink, on tracing  
paper  
38.3 x 26.2 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 772 V/1962  
F - JH -

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

Amsterdam 1987, p. 449,  
no. 2.492; Heenk 1995, p. 157.

EXHIBITIONS

None.

1.2 Tracing of the cover of  
*Paris illustré. Le Japon*

JULY-DECEMBER 1887  
Pencil, pen and ink, on tracing  
paper  
39.4 x 26.3 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 773 V/1962  
F - JH -

PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent van  
Gogh Foundation; 1962-73 on  
loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

Amsterdam 1987, p. 450,  
no. 2.493; Heenk 1995, p. 157.

EXHIBITIONS

1998-99 Washington & Los  
Angeles, unnumbered; 2000  
Amsterdam, no catalogue.

## Appendix 2

### *Rejected works*

Examination of the 124 drawings in this catalogue covering Van Gogh's Antwerp and Paris periods revealed that there are six which can no longer be attributed to him. The authenticity of most of them has never been called into question, probably because they entered the museum by way of the family collection. They are not forgeries and not one of them is signed. They are simply misattributions. The most likely explanation is that they ended up in the brothers' collection as gifts or were exchanged for works by Vincent.

<sup>1</sup> See Drawings 1, *Introduction*, note 35.

<sup>2</sup> See also the *Introduction*.

<sup>3</sup> Welsh-Ovcharov 1976, p. 236.

#### SEATED FEMALE NUDE

This drawing (no. 2.1) is executed on a large, heavy sheet of wove paper comparable in dimensions and thickness to the one on which Van Gogh drew two studies of seated men in Antwerp (cats. 223, 224). The style and technique, however, bear no relation to Van Gogh's. The draftsman worked in charcoal, which Van Gogh only used for an initial draft and in combination with other materials, but otherwise avoided as far as possible.<sup>1</sup> There is a very marked emphasis on the contour, which is built up with weak, curving lines. The distinguishing features of Van Gogh's studies from the live model and plaster casts are that he worked from the volumes and handled line in a distinctively forceful, rather angular manner (cats. 219-224).<sup>2</sup> The way in which the woman's nose and mouth is indicated with three horizontal dashes has no parallel in Van Gogh's œuvre. In addition, her feet and the hand she is holding over her breast are very poorly executed. Given the subject and the paper, the drawing was very probably made by a fellow student at one of the Antwerp drawing clubs.

#### THE HILL OF MONTMARTRE

This is not the first time that doubts have been raised about this drawing (no. 2.2). Welsh-Ovcharov listed it under the rejected works in her doctoral dissertation,<sup>3</sup> although without explanation. The reason for its attribution to Van Gogh, leaving aside the fact that it was part of the family collection, was probably the subject. The hill with the three windmills, the Ferme Debray and the vegetable gardens is seen from a different angle in a painting by Van Gogh now in the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo (F 266 JH 1175). The drawing was executed with two kinds of chalk, one black, the other black with a brown tinge – a combination which Van Gogh also used. What sets this sheet apart, though, is the cautious, dutiful draftsmanship and the way the composition is built up with geometrical shapes like cubes, right angles and triangles. Another striking feature is the lack of monumentality in the buildings. The windmill on the right, for example, is far slenderer than it is in Van Gogh's work. The sheets which he laid down with black drawing materials are also more dynamic due to his

4 The right edge of the figure study fits against the right edge of the cast study.

5 Destreméau 1996, p. 182, notes 33-35.

exploitation of the contrasts between light and shade. This drawing is 'puddled' almost throughout, making it flat and dull. The method of rendering the sky is very different from Van Gogh's, and the foreground has no structure. It is possible that the drawing was made by someone who was working with Van Gogh from the same subject.

#### CORMON STUDIES

While examining the figure and cast studies which Van Gogh made in Cormon's studio (cats. 238-271) it became clear that two drawings fall outside that group, disparate though it is: *Standing male nude seen from the side* (no. 2.3) and *Venus* (no. 2.4). The draftsman of both works was inflexible in his use of delicate hatchings to create volumes, at which he was not very successful, as can be seen from the two-dimensionality of the legs in particular. The short vertical hatchings describing the man's ribs and the folds of skin of the Venus are alien to Van Gogh's œuvre. Another difference lies in the handling of the background. It is always vigorous in Van Gogh's drawings, and his hatchings are still clearly visible despite the use of a stump, whereas in these two works it looks woolly, particularly in the nude study. Both are also built up from the outlines, while Van Gogh usually worked from the volumes. They are on two pieces of paper which originally formed a single sheet of laid paper without a watermark and of irregular thickness.<sup>4</sup>

The plaster cast of *Venus* is known to have been in Cormon's studio, where Van Gogh drew it on several occasions (see cats. 251-271). This particular study is in black chalk. The initial draft of the standing nude was in pencil, with the man standing out against a background of stumped charcoal, a material which Van Gogh only used for his first draft. Another oddity is the detailed representation of the man's right hand in the supporting loop at the top. Van Gogh generally left this kind of detail as no more than a rough sketch (see cats. 219 and 249). Another reason to doubt the attribution to him is the signature at bottom left, of which only the initial letter 'B' is now legible. Both sheets were probably drawn by a fellow student in Cormon's studio. Those whose name began with B were someone called Bidault, Joseph Beuzon, Reginald Bottomley, Emile Bernard, Eugène Boch and Ernest Bordes.<sup>5</sup> The drawing does not appear to bear any relation to Bernard's work (see fig. 238a), and there are no comparable drawings by the others.

#### TORSO OF VENUS

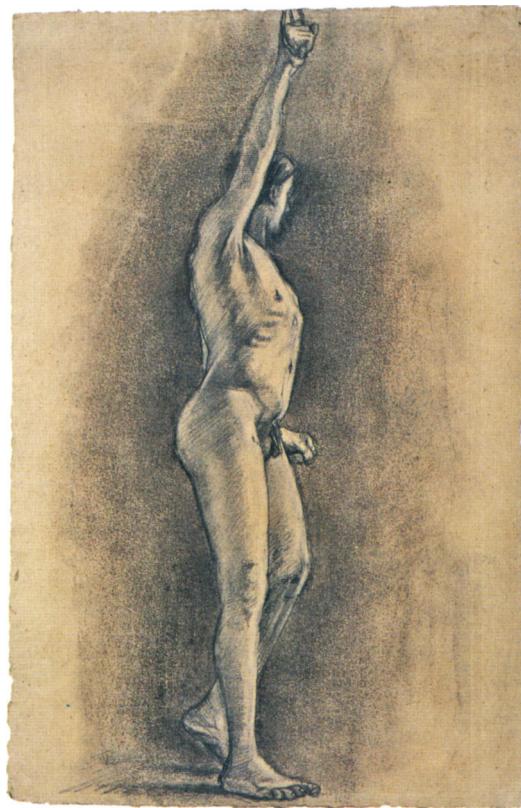
This pencil sketch (no. 2.5) is on the back of a cast study by Van Gogh (cat. 286) and has always been regarded as an autograph work. In fact, it is nothing more than a crude tracing, in mirror image, of the blue chalk drawing on the other side. Some of the embellishments suggest that it was a juvenile prank, for among other things the black chalk was used to give the cast pubic hair. The sheet itself is from one of Van Gogh's sketchbooks, and the faint, framed sketch of a river landscape in the lower left corner is indeed by him.



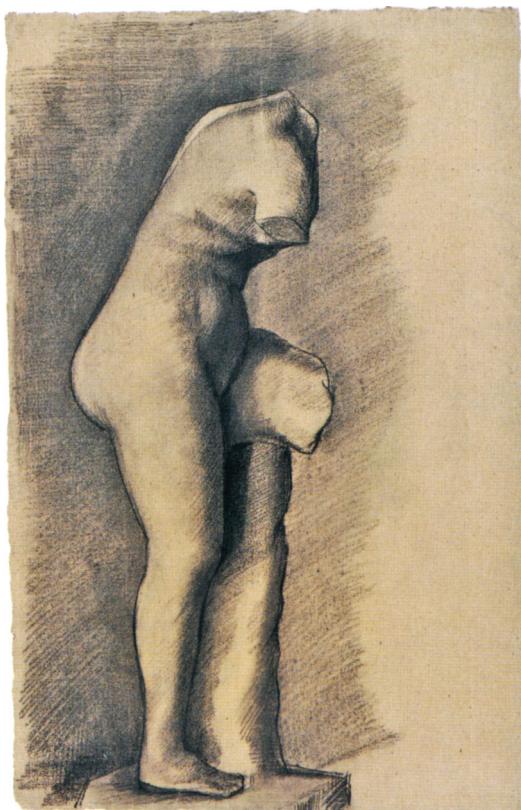
2.1 Seated female nude



2.2 The hill of Montmartre



2.3 Standing male nude seen from the side



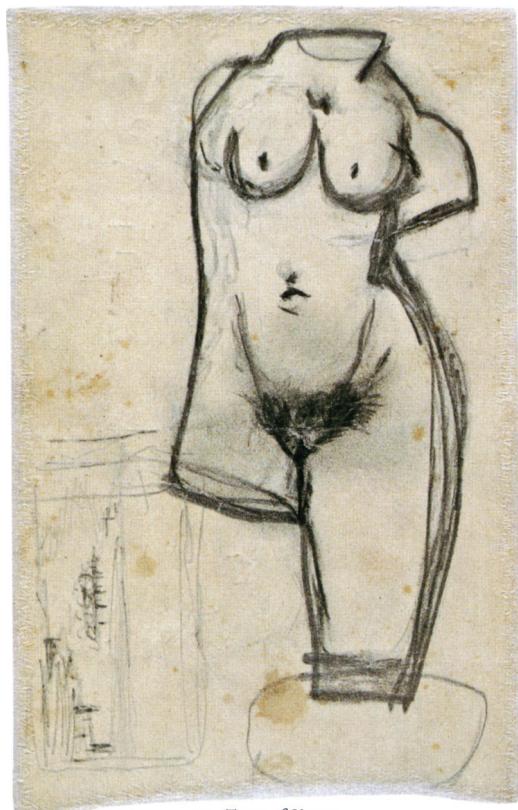
2.4 Venus

6 'Heden middag heb ik mijne schilderijen treggehaald [sic]. Komt u vanavond ook in de Chalet? Ik schrijf dit eigenlijk omdat de vrouw die de kamer schoon maakt dit bepaald verlangt, een voorzichtig wijfje voorwaar. Adieu Koning.'

7 Hulsker 1996, p. 253. The question marks against some of the works has caused a lot of confusion, because the author has failed to explain them. They could refer to either an uncertain date or doubts about the attribution.

#### SORROWING WOMAN

This nude woman (no. 2.6), with her head resting on her arms, is seated on the ground in a pose similar to Van Gogh's own *Sorrowing woman* (cat. 305), although here she is seen from the front. The drawing is executed with hasty, crude strokes of the pencil. Van Gogh did jot down some rapid drawings in Paris, but they are all well observed (cat. 287, 293-302), which this is not. The artist made several attempts to find the right outline, and the foreshortening of the arms is lamentable. The sheet is folded in two, and on the other half is a note by the artist Arnold Koning (1860-1945). 'I took my paintings away this afternoon. Will you also be at the Chalet this evening? The real reason I am writing is that the woman who cleans the room is most insistent about this, a particular little lady to be sure. Adieu, Koning'.<sup>6</sup> The note was very probably meant for Van Gogh, and must have been written at the end of the exhibition which he had organised in the Du Chalet restaurant in November/December 1887, in which Koning also took part. The woman who was responsible for cleaning the room in which it was held evidently wanted the paintings removed before she started work. It is very possible that the drawing is also by Koning, which means that it was made in November or December 1887. Jan Hulsker is the only author who has so far doubted the attribution to Van Gogh, at least if that is the meaning of the question mark following the date in the 1996 edition of his œuvre catalogue.<sup>7</sup>



2.5 *Torso of Venus*



2.6 *Sorrowing woman*

## 2.1 Seated female nude

LATE JANUARY-LATE FEBRUARY  
1886  
Charcoal on wove paper  
73.6 x 56.9 cm  
Unsigned  
Inv. d 170 V/1962  
F 1368 JH 1015

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

Lettres 1911, pl. xxxix; De la  
Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 118, vol. 4,  
pl. cxxxvi; Tralbaut 1969, facing  
p. 200; De la Faille 1970, pp. 476,  
660; Amsterdam 1987, pp. 429,  
430, no. 2.373; Otterlo 1990,  
p. 184; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1,  
pp. 118, 355, vol. 2, pl. cxxxvi;  
Heenk 1995, p. 137; Hulsker  
1996, pp. 218, 219.

### EXHIBITIONS

1948-49 The Hague, no. 230;  
1955 Antwerp, no. 215; 1956  
Haarlem, no. 48; 1960-61  
Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg &  
Toronto, no. 117; 1986 Amster-  
dam, no catalogue; 1990 Otterlo,  
no. 131.

## 2.2 The hill of Montmartre

DATE UNKNOWN  
Black chalk, black chalk with a  
brown tinge, on laid paper  
31.8 x 47.8 cm  
Watermark: PL BAS  
Unsigned

Inv. d 151 V/1962  
F 1398 JH 1174

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 123,  
vol. 4, pl. cxliv; De la Faille  
1970, pp. 490, 661; Welsh-  
Ovcharov 1976, p. 236; Amster-  
dam 1987, p. 445, no. 2.468;  
Van der Wolk 1987, pp. 296,  
297; Otterlo 1990, p. 202; De la  
Faille 1992, vol. 1, pp. 123, 363,  
vol. 2, pl. cxliv; Heenk 1995,  
p. 153; Hulsker 1996, pp. 254,  
256.

### EXHIBITIONS

1905 Amsterdam 1, no. 345  
[Dfl. 175]; 1910 Leiden, no cat.  
known; 1914-15 Amsterdam,  
no. 133; 1923 Utrecht, no. 5; 1923  
Rotterdam, no cat. known; 1926  
Munich, no. 2100 (not for sale);  
1948 Amersfoort, no cat. known;  
1948 Hilversum, no cat. known;  
1948-49 The Hague, no. 237;  
1953 Zundert, no. 50; 1953 Hoens-  
broek, no. 100; 1955 Antwerp,  
no. 229; 1957 Nijmegen, no. 46;  
1957-58 Stockholm, no. 50, Luleå,  
Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund,  
Sandviken & Gothenburg, no cat.  
known; 1964 Zundert, no. 21;  
1966 Paris & Albi, no. 35; 1967  
Lille & Zürich, no. 37; 1971-72  
Paris, no. 151; 1975 Malmö,  
no. 53; 1976 Stockholm & Oslo,  
no. 53; 1976-77 Tokyo, Kyoto &  
Nagoya, no. 53; 1988 Rome,  
no. 79; 1990 Otterlo, no. 150.

## 2.3 Standing male nude seen from the side

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Pencil, charcoal, on laid paper  
48.2 x 31.3 cm

Signed at lower left: B [remainder  
illegible]

Inv. d 46 V/1962  
F 1364c JH 1084

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73

on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1928, vol. 3, p. 118,  
as 1364, vol. 4, as 1364, pl. cxxxv;  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 479, 660;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 435,  
no. 2.408; Otterlo 1990, pp. 29,  
194; De la Faille 1992, vol. 1,  
pp. 118, as 1364, 354, vol. 2,  
pl. cxxxv; Heenk 1995, pp. 143,  
145, 146; Hulsker 1996, pp. 234,  
235.

### EXHIBITION

1990 Otterlo, no. 139.

## 2.4 Venus

OCTOBER 1886-JANUARY 1887  
Black chalk on laid paper  
48.4 x 31.1 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 403 V/1962  
F 1363e JH 1049

### PROVENANCE

1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation; 1962-73  
on loan to the Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam; 1973 on permanent  
loan to the Van Gogh Museum,  
Amsterdam.

### LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 478, 479,  
660; Amsterdam 1987, p. 438,  
no. 2.425; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 352, vol. 2, pl. cxxxii;

Heenk 1995, pp. 143, 144;  
Hulsker 1996, pp. 228, 229.

EXHIBITIONS  
None.

2.5 Torso of Venus

DATE UNKNOWN  
Pencil, black chalk, on wove  
paper  
20.8 x 13.0 cm  
Unsigned  
Verso of cat. 286

Inv. d 140 V/1962  
SD 1716v JH 1074

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1962 Vincent  
van Gogh Foundation (ratified in  
1982); 1962-73 on loan to the  
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam;  
1973 on permanent loan to the  
Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE  
De la Faille 1970, pp. 584, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 442,  
no. 2.449; Van der Wolk 1987,  
pp. 142, 144; De la Faille 1992,  
vol. 1, p. 459, vol. 2, pl. CCLIII;  
Heenk 1995, p. 148; Hulsker  
1996, pp. 230, 232, 233.

EXHIBITION  
1962 London, no. 34.

2.6 Sorrowing woman

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1887  
Pencil on laid paper  
33.0 x 39.5 cm  
Unsigned

Inv. d 141 V/1962  
SD 1717 JH 1163

PROVENANCE  
1890-91 T. van Gogh; 1891-1925  
J.G. van Gogh-Bonger; 1925-62  
V.W. van Gogh; 1973 on perma-  
nent loan to the Van Gogh  
Museum, Amsterdam.

LITERATURE

De la Faille 1970, pp. 584, 672;  
Amsterdam 1987, p. 445, no. 2.465;  
De la Faille 1992, vol. 1, p. 459,  
vol. 2, pl. CCLIII; Heenk 1995,  
p. 158; Hulsker 1996, pp. 250, 253.

EXHIBITION

1962 London, no. 35.

# Exhibitions

1896 PARIS Galerie Vollard, November  
Title unknown (no cat. known) b 1437 V/1962

1897 GRONINGEN Groningsch Museum, March-April  
Title unknown (no cat. known) b 2187 V/1982, b 5423 V/1996

1905 AMSTERDAM I Stedelijk Museum, 15 July-1 September  
*Tentoonstelling Vincent van Gogh*  
b 2192 V/1982, b 5423 V/1996,  
De la Faille 1992  
AMSTERDAM II Stedelijk Museum, c. 15 August-1 September (supplementary to 1905 Amsterdam I)  
*Tentoonstelling Vincent van Gogh*  
b 2192 V/1982, De la Faille 1992,  
*Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* 21-8-1905

1906 ROTTERDAM Kunstzalen Oldenzeel, 26 January-28 February  
*Tentoonstelling Vincent van Gogh*  
b 5426 V/1996

MIDDELBURG Sociétéit Sint Joris, 25 March-1 April  
*Tentoonstelling van werken van Vincent van Gogh (verzameling mevr. Cohen Gosschalk)* (no catalogue)  
b 5439 V/1996, b 5443 V/1996,  
b 5446 V/1996

BERLIN unknown location, December  
*Zwölften Kunstausstellung der Berliner Secession, Zeichnende Künste*  
b 3923 V/1989, 1905 Amsterdam I

1909-10 MUNICH Brakl, October-December; FRANKFURT Frankfurter Kunstverein,

January; DRESDEN Galerie Ernst Arnold, February-March;  
CHEMNITZ Kunstsalon Gerstenberger, April

*Vincent van Gogh*  
b 2181 V/1982, b 3851 V/1989,  
b 3871 V/1989, b 3902 V/1989,  
1905 Amsterdam I  
BERLIN Ausstellungshaus am Kurfürstendamm, 27 November-9 January  
*Neunzehnten Ausstellung der Berliner Secession, Zeichnende Künste*  
b 2203 V/1982

1910 LEIDEN Het Leidsche Volkshuis, 14 November-closing date unknown  
*Schilderijen en tekeningen van Van Gogh* (no cat. known)  
b 2198 V/1982, 1905 Amsterdam I

1911 AMSTERDAM Larensche Kunsthandel, 16 June-July  
*Tentoonstelling van schilderijen, aquarellen en tekeningen van Vincent van Gogh*  
b 5479 V/1996, 1905 Amsterdam I

1911-12 HAMBURG Galerie Commeter, 10 November-March  
Title unknown (no cat. known)  
b 3817 V/1989, 1905 Amsterdam I

1912 THE HAGUE Artz en De Bois, July-August;  
AMSTERDAM Kunsthandel C.M. van Gogh, autumn  
*Tentoonstelling van tekeningen door Vincent van Gogh*

1914-15 AMSTERDAM Stedelijk Museum, 22 December-12 January  
*Teekeningen door Vincent van*

*Gogh. Uit de verzameling van mevrouw J. van Gogh-Bonger en den heer V.W. van Gogh*  
De la Faille 1992

1920 NEW YORK Montross Gallery, 23 October-December  
*Vincent van Gogh exhibition*  
b 6242 V/1996

1923 UTRECHT Vereeniging 'Voor de Kunst', 28 January-25 February  
*Vincent van Gogh.*  
*Teekeningencollectie van Mevr. J. van Gogh-Bonger*  
1923 Rotterdam, De la Faille 1992  
ROTTERDAM Rotterdamsche Kunstkring, 15 March-2 April  
*Vincent van Gogh.*  
*Teekeningencollectie van Mevr. J. van Gogh-Bonger* (no cat. known)  
1905 Amsterdam I, 1914-15  
Amsterdam, De la Faille 1992,  
Rotterdam City Archives

1926 AMSTERDAM Stedelijk Museum, 15 May-15 June  
*Vincent van Gogh tentoonstelling ter gelegenheid van het internationale jeugdfest der S.J.I.*  
MUNICH Glaspalast, 1 June-3 October  
*I. Allgemeine Kunst-Ausstellung*

1926-27 LONDON The Leicester Galleries, 26 November-6 January  
*Vincent van Gogh exhibition*  
b 5959 V/1996

1927-28 BERLIN Otto Wacker, 6 December-1 February  
*Vincent van Gogh. Erste grosse Ausstellung seiner Zeichnungen und Aquarelle*

1928 VIENNA Neue Galerie, February-March; HANNOVER Kestner-Gesellschaft, 3-25 April  
*Vincent van Gogh. Aquarelle und Handzeichnungen*  
PARIS Galerie Dru, 23 June-12 July  
*Aquarelles, dessins et pastels de Van Gogh (1853-1890)*

1929 AMSTERDAM Stedelijk Museum, 19 October-17 November  
*Teekeningen en aquarellen door Vincent van Gogh*

1929-30 ROTTERDAM Rotterdamsche Kring, 21 December-12 January  
*Teekeningen en aquarellen door Vincent van Gogh uit het bezit van den heer Ir. V.W. van Gogh te Laren*

1930 LAREN Openbare Leeszaal, 4-30 September  
*Teekeningen van Vincent van Gogh*

1930-31 ARNHEM De Korenbeurs, 12-26 December;  
GRONINGEN Pictura, Groote Societeit, 4-19 January;  
LEEUWARDEN Friesch Museum, 24 January-8 February;  
ENSCHÉDE Openbare Leeszaal, 13-25 February  
*Tentoonstelling van tekeningen, aquarellen en schilderijen door Vincent van Gogh*  
(Arnhem, Leeuwarden and Enschede no cat. known)  
ASM

1931 AMSTERDAM Stedelijk Museum, 2 May-closing date unknown  
*Vincent van Gogh. Werken uit de verzameling van Ir. V.W. van*

Gogh, in bruikleen afgestaan aan  
de Gemeente Amsterdam

1932 MANCHESTER Manchester  
City Art Gallery, 13 October-  
27 November

Vincent van Gogh. Loan collection  
of paintings & drawings

1937 PARIS Les nouveaux  
musées, Quai de Tokyo,  
June-October  
La vie et l'œuvre de Van Gogh  
OSLO Kunstnernes Hus, 3-24  
December  
Vincent van Gogh. Malerier,  
tegninger, akvareller

1938 COPENHAGEN  
Charlottenborg, January  
Vincent van Gogh. Malerier,  
tegninger, akvareller

1945 AMSTERDAM Stedelijk  
Museum, 14 September-  
1 December  
Vincent van Gogh

1946 STOCKHOLM National-  
museum, 8 March-28 April;  
GOTHENBURG Göteborgs  
Konstmuseum, 3-26 May;  
MALMÖ Malmö Museum,  
29 May-16 June  
Vincent van Gogh. Utställning  
anordnad till förmån för svenska  
hollandshjälpen  
COPENHAGEN Charlottenborg,  
22 June-14 July  
Vincent van Gogh. Udstilling af  
malerier og tegninger

1946-47 LIÈGE Musée des  
Beaux-Arts, 12 October-  
3 November; BRUSSELS Palais  
des Beaux-Arts, 9 November-  
19 December; MONS Musée des  
Beaux-Arts, 27 December-January  
Vincent van Gogh

1947 PARIS Musée de  
l'Orangerie, 24 January-15 March  
Vincent van Gogh

1947 GENEVA Musée Rath,  
22 March-20 April

172 œuvres de Vincent van Gogh  
(1852-1890)

b 6793 V/1996, 1947 Paris  
1947 BASEL Kunsthalle Basel,  
11 October-23 November  
Vincent van Gogh 1853-1890

1947-48 LONDON Tate Gallery,  
10 December-14 January;  
BIRMINGHAM City Art Gallery,  
24 January-14 February; GLASGOW  
City Art Gallery, 21 February-  
14 March  
Vincent van Gogh 1853-1890  
b 6773 V/1996

1948 AMERSFOORT Kunstzaal  
D'Oude Lanteern, 31 January-  
22 February  
Vincent van Gogh tekeningen  
(no cat. known)  
b 6656 V/1996, b 6659 V/1996  
De Nieuwe Eeuw 21-2-1948,  
De Waarheid 23-3-1948

HILVERSUM Goois Museum,  
20 March-17 April  
Tekeningen van Vincent van Gogh  
(no cat. known)  
b 6659 V/1996  
LUXEMBOURG Musée de l'état,  
3-25 April  
La peinture hollandaise. Les impres-  
sionnistes  
BERGEN Kunstforening,  
23 March-18 April; OSLO  
Kunstnernes Hus, 24 April-  
15 May  
Vincent van Gogh

1948-49 THE HAGUE  
Gemeentemuseum, 12 October-  
10 January  
Vincent van Gogh. Collectie ir.  
V.W. van Gogh

1949 HENGELO Openbare  
Leeszaal, 29 January-closing date  
unknown  
Tekeningen van Vincent van Gogh  
(no cat. known)  
b 6663 V/1996  
GOUDA Catharina Gasthuis,  
13 April-29 May  
Tekeningen van Vincent van Gogh

(no cat. known)  
b 6667 V/1996

1949-50 NEW YORK The Metro-  
politan Museum of Art,  
21 October-15 January; CHICAGO  
The Art Institute of Chicago,  
1 February-16 April

Vincent van Gogh paintings and  
drawings. A special loan exhibition

1951 LYONS Musée de Lyons,  
5 February-27 March; GRENOBLE  
Musée de Grenoble, 30 March-  
2 May  
Vincent van Gogh

SAINT-RÉMY Hotel de Sade,  
5-27 May  
Vincent van Gogh en Provence  
AMSTERDAM Stedelijk Museum,  
19 October-3 December  
Rembrandt, Hokusai, Van Gogh

1952 BASEL Kunstmuseum  
Basel, January-February  
Rembrandt, Hokusai, Van Gogh

DELFT Museum Het Prinsenhof,  
25 March-5 May  
De aquarel 1800-1950  
GRONINGEN Kunstlievend  
Genootschap Pictura, 12 April-  
12 May  
Rembrandt, Hokusai, Van Gogh  
(no cat. known)  
BSM

1953 ZÜRICH Kunsthaus Zürich,  
24 January-1 March  
Van Gogh. Zeichnungen und  
Aquarelle aus der Vincent van  
Gogh-Stiftung im Stedelijk Museum  
Amsterdam

THE HAGUE Gemeentemuseum,  
30 March-17 May  
Vincent van Gogh

ZUNDERT Parochiehuis, 30 March-  
20 April  
Vincent van Gogh in Zundert  
HOENS BROEK Kasteel  
Hoensbroek, 23 May-27 July  
Vincent van Gogh  
BSM  
OTTERLO Kröller-Müller  
Museum, 24 May-19 July;

AMSTERDAM Stedelijk Museum,  
23 July-20 September  
Eeuwfeest Vincent van Gogh  
ASSEN Provinciehuis,  
6-29 November  
Vincent van Gogh in Assen  
BSM

1953-54 SAINT LOUIS City Art  
Museum of Saint Louis,  
17 October-13 December;  
PHILADELPHIA Philadelphia  
Museum of Art, 2 January-  
28 February; TOLEDO The Toledo  
Museum of Art, 7 March-30 April  
Vincent van Gogh 1853-1890  
BERGEN OP ZOOM Stadhuis,  
23 December-10 January  
Vincent van Gogh

1954-55 BERN Kunstmuseum  
Bern, 27 November-30 January  
Vincent van Gogh  
BSM

1955 ANTWERP Feestzaal,  
7 May-19 June  
Vincent van Gogh  
AMSTERDAM Stedelijk Museum,  
24 June-September  
Vincent van Gogh

1955-56 LIVERPOOL The Walker  
Art Gallery, 29 October-  
10 December; MANCHESTER  
Manchester City Art Gallery,  
17 December-4 February;  
NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE Laing Art  
Gallery, 11 February-24 March  
Vincent van Gogh. Paintings &  
drawings, mainly from the collec-  
tion of Ir. V.W. van Gogh

1956 HAARLEM Vishal, 21 July-  
29 August  
Vincent van Gogh  
BSM

1957 BREDA De Beyerden,  
2-24 February  
Vincent van Gogh  
MARSEILLES Musée Cantini,  
12 March-28 April  
Vincent van Gogh

NIJMEGEN Waag, 13 March-15 April  
*Tekeningen en aquarellen van Vincent van Gogh*

1957-58 STOCKHOLM  
Nationalmuseum, 5 October-22 November; LULEÅ Shopping-center, 4-19 December; KIRUNA  
Norrmalmsskolan, 29 December-13 January; UMEÅ Länsmuseet, 18 January-2 February; ÖSTER-SUND Konstmuseet, 8-23 February; SANDVIKEN Konsthallen, 27 February-11 March; GOTHENBURG  
Göteborgs Konsthallen, 15-30 March  
*Vincent van Gogh. Akvareller, teckningar, oljestudier, brev* (only cat. Stockholm, no other cats. known)  
b 6783 V/1996  
LEIDEN Stedelijk Museum  
De Lakenhal, 9 November-16 December; SCHIEDAM Stedelijk Museum, 21 December-27 January  
*Vincent van Gogh*

1958 MONS Musée des Beaux-Arts, 22 March-5 May  
*Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890). Son art et ses amis*

1958-59 SAN FRANCISCO  
The M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, 6 October-30 November; LOS ANGELES Los Angeles County Museum, 10 December-18 January; PORTLAND The Portland Art Museum, 28 January-1 March; SEATTLE Seattle Art Museum, 7 March-19 April  
*Vincent van Gogh. Paintings and drawings*

WASHINGTON National Gallery of Art; NEW YORK The Pierpont Morgan Library; MINNEAPOLIS The Minneapolis Institute of Arts; BOSTON Museum of Fine Arts; CLEVELAND The Cleveland Museum of Art; CHICAGO The Art Institute of Chicago

(dates unknown)  
*Dutch drawings. Masterpieces of five centuries*

1959-60 UTRECHT Centraal Museum, 18 December-1 February  
*Vincent van Gogh schilderijen en tekeningen, verzameling Ir. V.W. van Gogh*

1960 ENSCHEDE Rijksmuseum Twenthe, 6 February-20 March  
*Vincent van Gogh. Tekeningen*

1960-61 MONTREAL The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 6 October-6 November; OTTAWA The National Gallery of Canada, 17 November-18 December; WINNIPEG The Winnipeg Art Gallery, 29 December-31 January; TORONTO The Art Gallery of Toronto, 10 February-12 March  
*Vincent van Gogh. Paintings-drawings / Tableaux-dessins*

1961 SCARBOROUGH  
Scarborough Art Gallery, 12-17 June  
*Dutch Graphic Art* (no catalogue)  
BSM

1961-62 BALTIMORE  
The Baltimore Museum of Art, 18 October-26 November; CLEVELAND The Cleveland Museum of Art, 5 December-14 January; BUFFALO Albright Art Gallery, 30 January-11 March; BOSTON Museum of Fine Arts, 22 March-29 April  
*Vincent van Gogh. Paintings, watercolors and drawings*

LIÈGE Musée des Beaux-Arts, 24 November-8 January; BREDA De Beyerd, 26 January-4 March  
*Aquarelles et gouaches hollandaises de 1850 à nos jours / Nederlandse aquarellen en gouaches van 1850 tot heden*

1962 LONDON Marlborough Fine Art Ltd., May-June  
*Van Gogh's life in his drawings. Van Gogh's relationship with Signac*

1962-63 PITTSBURGH Carnegie Institute, 18 October-4 November; DETROIT Detroit Institute of Arts, 11 December-29 January; KANSAS CITY William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Mary Atkins Museum of Fine Arts, 7 February-26 March  
*Vincent van Gogh. Paintings, watercolors and drawings*

1963 PARIS Institut Néerlandais, 28 February-31 March  
*L'Aquarelle néerlandaise au siècle dernier*

SHEFFIELD Graves Art Gallery, 21 April-19 May  
*Vincent van Gogh. Paintings and drawings*

AMSTERDAM Stedelijk Museum, 6 July-29 September  
*150 jaar Nederlandse Kunst. Schilderijen, beelden, tekeningen, grafiek 1813-1963*

HUMLEBAEK Louisiana, 24 October-15 December  
*Vincent van Gogh. Malerier og tegninger*

1964 WASHINGTON  
The Washington Gallery of Modern Art, 2 February-19 March; NEW YORK The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 2 April-28 June  
*Vincent van Gogh. Paintings, watercolors and drawings*

ZUNDERT Parochiehuis, 28 May-8 June  
*Tentoonstelling van tekeningen van Vincent van Gogh*

BSM

1965 CHARLEROI Palais des Beaux-Arts, 9 January-9 February; GHENT Museum voor Schone Kunsten, 19 February-28 March  
*Vincent van Gogh. Schilderijen, aquarellen, tekeningen*

1965-66 STOCKHOLM Moderna Museet, 23 October-19 December; GOTHENBURG Göteborgs Konstmuseum, 30 December-

20 February  
*Vincent van Gogh. Målningar, akvareller, teckningar* (Gothenburg no cat. known)  
BSM

1966 PARIS Institut Néerlandais, 28 January-20 March; ALBI Musée Toulouse-Lautrec, 27 May-31 August  
*Vincent van Gogh. Dessinateur*

1967 LILLE Palais des Beaux Arts, 14 January-13 March; ZÜRICH Kunsthaus Zürich, 5 April-4 June  
*Vincent van Gogh. Dessins, aquarelles*

WOLFSBURG Stadthalle Wolfsburg, 18 February-2 April  
*Vincent van Gogh. Gemälde, Aquarelle, Zeichnungen*

GLASGOW The Scottish Arts Council, 21 October-11 November  
*A man of influence: Alex Reid 1854-1928*

1967-68 DALLAS Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, 6 October-4 November; PHILADELPHIA Philadelphia Museum of Art, 17 November-31 December; TOLEDO The Toledo Museum of Art, 20 January-3 March; OTTAWA The National Gallery of Canada, 14 March-15 April  
*Vincent van Gogh. Drawings, watercolors*

1968 LIÈGE Musée des Beaux-Arts, 3-30 September  
*Vincent van Gogh. Dessins, aquarelles*

1968-69 LONDON Hayward Gallery, 23 October-12 January  
*Vincent van Gogh. Paintings and drawings of the Vincent van Gogh Foundation Amsterdam*

1969 HUMLEBAEK Louisiana, 25 January-16 March  
*Vincent van Gogh. Tegninger og akvareller*

1969-70 LOS ANGELES Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 14 October-1 December; SAINT LOUIS City Art Museum of Saint Louis, 20 December-1 February; PHILADELPHIA Philadelphia Museum of Art, 28 February-5 April (only paintings); COLUMBUS The Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts, 5 March-5 April (only drawings) *Vincent van Gogh. Paintings and drawings*

1970-71 BALTIMORE The Baltimore Museum of Art, 11 October-29 November; SAN FRANCISCO The M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, 11 December-31 January; BROOKLYN The Brooklyn Museum, 14 February-4 April *Vincent van Gogh. Paintings and drawings*

1971-72 PARIS Orangerie des Tuilleries, 21 December-10 April *Vincent van Gogh. Collection du Musée National Vincent van Gogh à Amsterdam*

1972 BORDEAUX Musée des Beaux-Arts, 21 April-20 June *Vincent van Gogh. Collection du Musée National Vincent van Gogh à Amsterdam*

NIJMEGEN Cultureel Centrum De Lindenbergh, 26 August-23 September *Kijken naar de spelen*

1972-73 STRASBOURG Musée d'Art Moderne, 22 October-15 January; BERN Kunstmuseum Bern, 25 January-15 April *Vincent van Gogh. Collection du Musée National Vincent van Gogh à Amsterdam*

1974 FLORENCE Palazzo Strozzi, 11 May-30 June *Quarta biennale internazionale della grafica d'arte. La grafica dal realismo al simbolismo*

1975 MÄLÖ Malmö Konsthall, 6 June-10 August *Vincent van Gogh. 100 teckningar och akvareller. 100 drawings and water colours*

1976 STOCKHOLM Galleriet, Kulturhuset, 10 February-28 March; OSLO Munch Museet, 5 April-15 June *Vincent van Gogh*

1976-77 TOKYO The National Museum of Western Art, 30 October-19 December; KYOTO The National Museum of Modern Art, 6 January-20 February; NAGOYA The Aichi Prefectural Art Gallery, 24 February-14 March *Vincent van Gogh exhibition*

1977 PARIS Grand Palais, 4 November-3 December *Vincent van Gogh*

1980 MONS Musée des Beaux-Arts, 3 October-30 November *Van Gogh et la Belgique*

1980-81 STUTTGART Württembergischer Kunstverein, 23 November-18 January *Van Gogh bis Cobra. Holländische Malerei 1880-1950*

1981 TORONTO Art Gallery of Ontario, 24 January-22 March; AMSTERDAM Van Gogh Museum, 9 April-14 June *Vincent van Gogh and the birth of cloisonism*

UTRECHT Centraal Museum, 14 February-20 April *Van Gogh tot Cobra. Nederlandse schilderkunst 1880-1950*

1982 AMSTERDAM Van Gogh Museum, 5 July-28 November *Een nieuwe keuze uit de collectie tekeningen en prenten*

1985-86 TOKYO The National Museum of Western Art, 12 October-8 December; NAGOYA Nagoya City Museum, 21 December-2 February *Vincent van Gogh exhibition*

1986 AMSTERDAM Van Gogh Museum, 13 February-30 March *Een winter in Antwerpen (no catalogue)*

OSAKA The National Museum of Art, 21 February-31 March *Vincent van Gogh from Dutch collections. Religion, humanity, nature*

1987-88 ENSCHEDE Rijksmuseum Twenthe, 21 November-31 January *Van schaamte ontbloot. Het naakt in de Nederlandse kunst, ca. 1500-heden*

1988 ROME Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, 28 January-4 April *Vincent van Gogh*

PARIS Musée d'Orsay, 2 February-15 May *Van Gogh à Paris*

1990 OTTERLO Kröller-Müller Museum, 30 March-29 July *Vincent van Gogh. Tekeningen*

1992 KYOTO Kyoto Museum of Art, 18 February-29 March; TOKYO Setagaya Museum of Art, 4 April-24 May *Vincent van Gogh and Japan*

1995 HAMBURG Hamburger Kunsthalle, 17 March-28 May *Van Gogh. Die parisener Selbstbildnisse*

1998-99 WASHINGTON National Gallery of Art, 4 October-3 January; LOS ANGELES Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 17 January-16 May *Van Gogh's Van Goghs. Masterpieces from the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam*

2000 AMSTERDAM Van Gogh Museum, 19 May-17 September *Reflecties: Japan en japonisme* (no catalogue)

MARTIGNY Fondation Pierre Gianadda, 21 June-26 November *Van Gogh*

TOKYO Seiji Togo Memorial Yasuda Kasai Museum of Art, 14 September-13 November *Vincent van Gogh drawing exhibition. Van Gogh and his time from the Van Gogh Museum and the H.W. Mesdag Museum*

2000-01 DETROIT The Detroit Institute of Arts, 12 March-4 June; BOSTON Museum of Fine Arts, 2 July-24 September; PHILADELPHIA Philadelphia Museum of Art, 22 October-14 January *Van Gogh. Face to face*

# Documents

*b 1437 V/1996* List of works by J. van Gogh-Bonger for 1896 Paris

*b 2181 V/1982* List of works for 1909-10 Munich, Frankfurt, Dresden & Chemnitz

*b 2187 V/1982* List of works by J. van Gogh-Bonger for 1897 Groningen

*b 2192 V/1982* Catalogue of 1905 Amsterdam with notes by J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger

*b 2198 V/1982* List of works for 1910 Leiden

*b 2203 V/1982* List of works by J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger for 1909-10 Berlin

*b 3817 V/1989* List of works by J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger for 1911-12 Hamburg

*b 3851 V/1989* Letter from Galerie Ernst Arnold to J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger, 23 March 1910, about 1909-10 Munich, Frankfurt, Dresden & Chemnitz

*b 3871 V/1989* Postcard from the Frankfurter Kunstverein to J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger, 27 January 1910, about 1910 Dresden

*b 3902 V/1989* Letter from Braks Moderne Kunsthändlung to J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger 8 January 1910, about 1910 Frankfurt

*b 3923 V/1989* List of works by J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger for 1906 Berlin

*b 5423 V/1996* List of works by J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger for 1905 Amsterdam

*b 5426 V/1996* Postcard from Wed. Oldenzeel to J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger, 11 October 1905, about 1906 Rotterdam

*b 5439 V/1996* Letter from Wed. Oldenzeel to J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger, 7 March 1906, about 1906 Middelburg

*b 5443 V/1996* List of works by J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger for 1906 Middelburg

*b 5446 V/1996* Letter from J. van Benthem Jutting to J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger about 1906 Middelburg

*b 5479 V/1996* List of works by J. Cohen Gosschalk-Bonger for 1911 Amsterdam

*b 5959 V/1996* List of works at 1926-27 London

*b 6242 V/1996* List of works by J. van Gogh-Bonger for 1920 New York

*b 6656 V/1996* Printed announcement for 1948 Amersfoort

*b 6659 V/1996* List of works for 1948 Hilversum

*b 6663 V/1996* List of works for 1949 Hengelo

*b 6667 V/1996* List of works for 1949 Gouda

*b 6773 V/1996* Correspondence between V.W. van Gogh and The Arts Council of Great Britain about 1947-48 London, Birmingham & Glasgow

*b 6783 V/1996* Correspondence between V.W. van Gogh and C. Nordenfalk about 1957-58 Stockholm, Luleå, Kiruna, Umeå, Östersund, Sandviken & Gothenburg

*b 6793 V/1996* Correspondence between V.W. van Gogh and Musée Rath about 1947 Geneva

# Literature

AMSTERDAM 1978 cat. *Japanese prints collected by Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam 1978

AMSTERDAM 1987 Evert van Uitert and Michael Hoyle (eds.), cat. *The Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh*, Amsterdam 1987

AMSTERDAM 1990 Evert van Uitert et al., exhib. cat. *Vincent van Gogh. Paintings*, Amsterdam (Van Gogh Museum) 1990

AMSTERDAM 1991 Charlotte van Rappard-Boon et al., cat. *Catalogue of the Van Gogh Museum's collection of Japanese prints*, Amsterdam & Zwolle 1991

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ANFRAY 1953 Louis Anfray, 'Plus de 500 tableaux de Vincent van Gogh ont écouché à la brocante', *Art-Documents* 3 (1953), no. 29 (February), pp. 10, 11

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# Concordance

DE LA FAILLE	CAT.	F 1367	247	SD 1702v	269
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F 1366r	246	SD 1701v	240	JH 976	213
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JH 1034	289	JH 1151	306		
JH 1035	237	JH 1152	302		
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# Colophon

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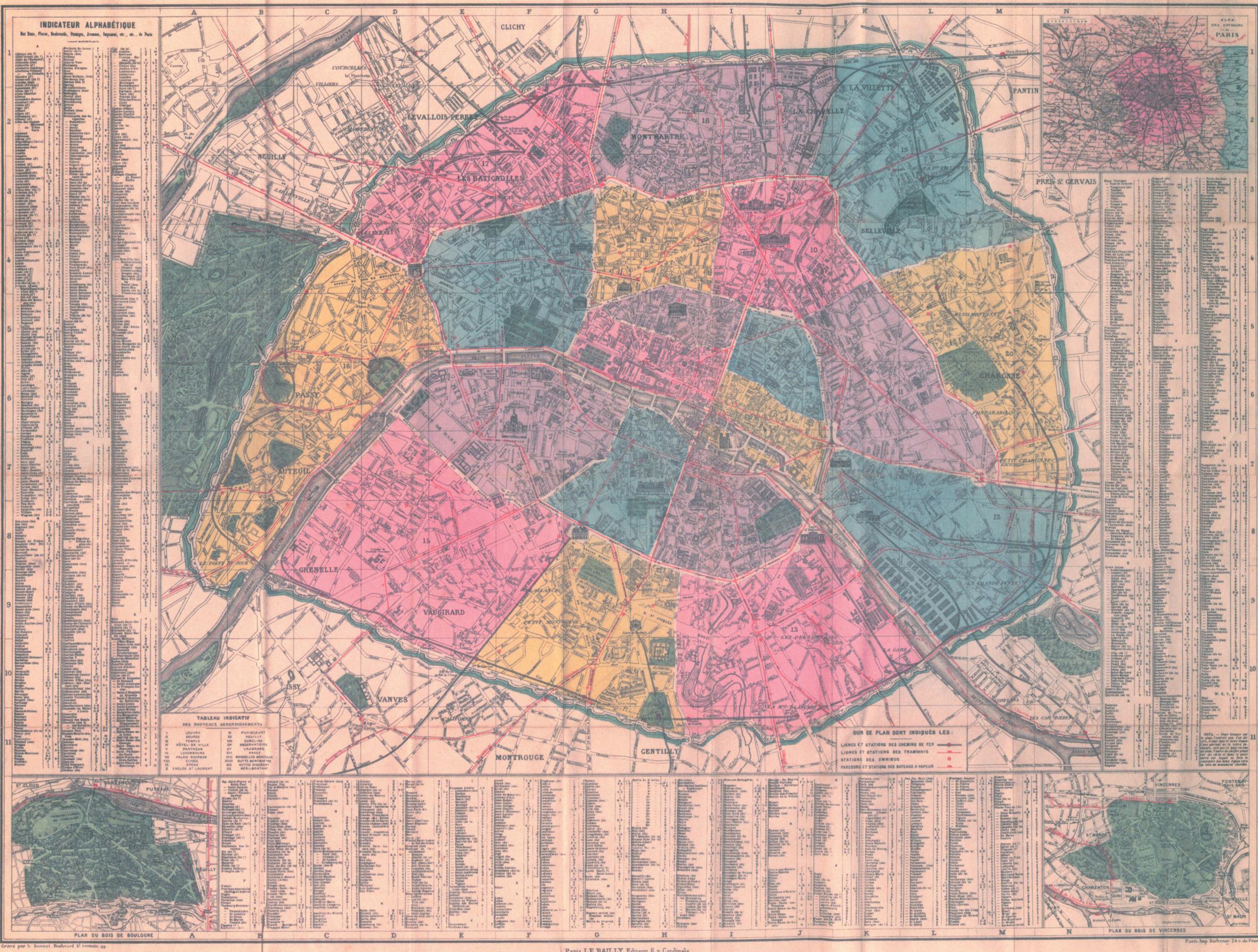
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## FRONT COVER

Detail of cat. 318, *Gate in the Paris ramparts*,  
1887

NOUVEAU PLAN COMPLET ET ILLUSTRÉ DE LA **VILLE DE PARIS** DIVISÉ EN 20 ARRONDISSEMENTS & EN 80 QUARTIERS

1884.



Vincent van Gogh Drawings

Volume 3

Antwerp and Paris 1885-1888

Van Gogh Museum

Marije Vellekoop

Sjraar van Heugten

With the assistance of

Monique Hageman

Roelie Zwikker

Translated by Michael Hoyle

Complete series of drawings  
and paintings, 8 volumes

Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam

The third volume in the series of Vincent van Gogh drawings in the Van Gogh Museum features his Antwerp and Paris works.

At the end of November 1885, Van Gogh went to Antwerp, where he attended lessons in drawing from plaster casts of classical statues at the Koninklijke Academie voor Schone Kunsten. He was also an active member of drawing clubs.

In March 1886, Van Gogh then moved to Paris, where he lived with his brother Theo in the vibrant artists' quarter of Montmartre. The next two years were extremely important to his development as an artist. He met fellow artists and art dealers, and observed changes in French painting at first hand. While a pupil in the studio of Fernand Cormon, he came into contact with other artists such as Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Emile Bernard. He continued to commit his surroundings to paper, as he had in Antwerp.

The catalogue reproduces and discusses over one hundred drawings and discusses their technique, subject, exhibition history and provenance. An extensive introduction examines Van Gogh's artistic development, and looks at questions of dating and attribution.

**VAN GOGH**

MUSEUM

